TRUE WEST

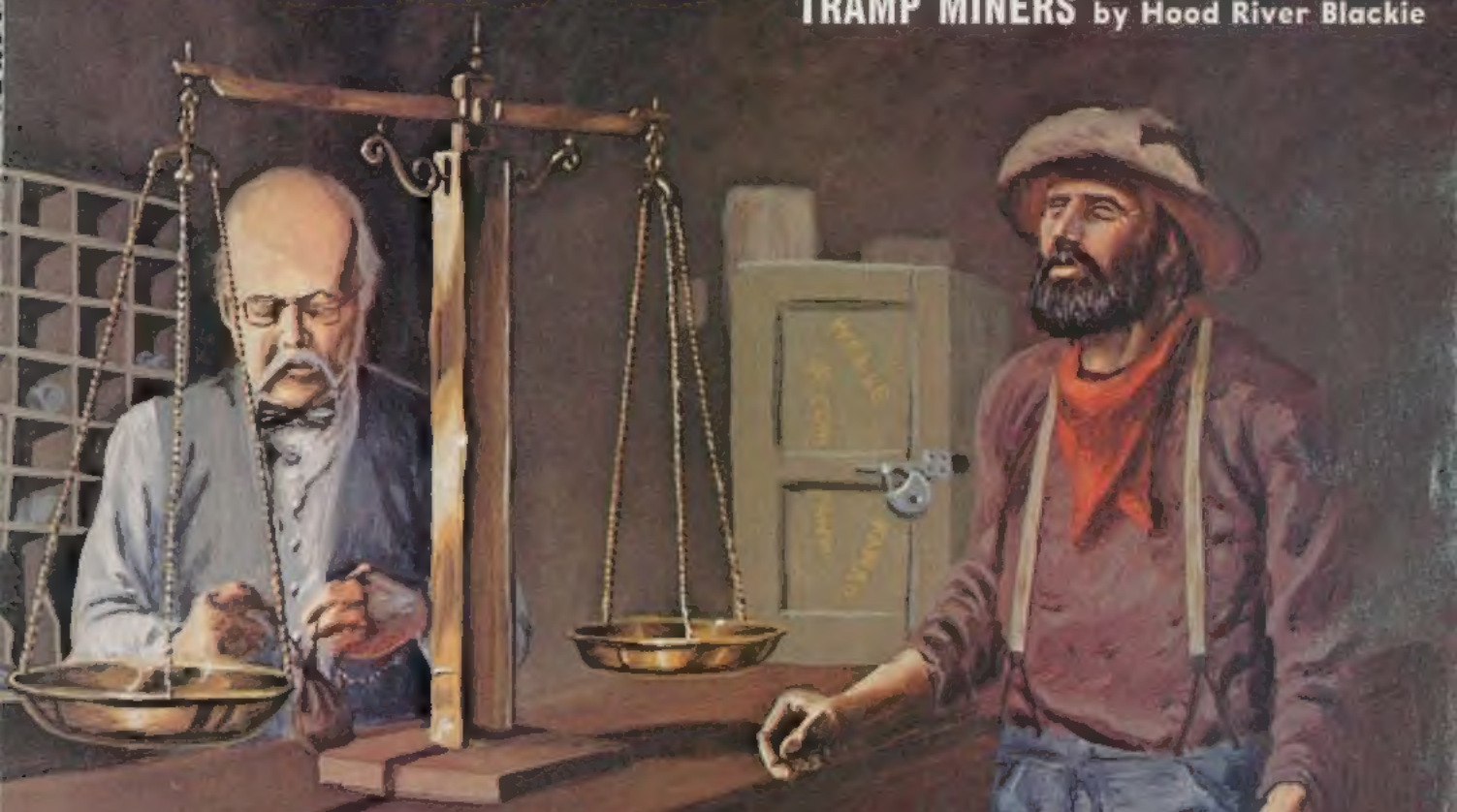
TRUE WEST
Frontier Times
OLD WEST
PUBLISHED IN THE WEST

47305
December, 1977
75¢

SOURDOUGH GOLD

TERROR TO THE RUSTLERS
—John R. Banister

TRAMP MINERS by Hood River Blackie



TREASURE & MINING ISSUE

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3—A Loose Cinch, 11x8
4—A Wounded Grizzly, 8½x11
5—Buffalo Hunt (spears), 11x7¼
6—Boss of the Trail Herd, 10½x8
7—Bronc to Breakfast, 15x8¼
8—Blackfeet Burning Crow Buffalo Range, 11⅛x8
9—Bucking Bronco, 8x11⅛
10—Better Than Bacon, 11x8½
11—On the Move, 13½x9¼
12—Buffalo Hunt (arrows), 12½x8½
13—On the Trail, 11x7½
14—The Pony Raid, 10½x8
15—At Close Quarters, 11x8½
16—Capturing the Grizzly, 15x8¼
17—Cinch Ring, 15x8½
18—Caught with the Goods, 14x9½
19—Cowboy Life, 10x14
20—Call of the Law, 13½x9¼
21—Carson's Men, 14x9½
22—Return of the Warriors, 13½x9¼
23—Piegan Indian, 9x12
24—Renegades Return, 13⅛x9½
25—Chief Joseph, 8x11
26—Deadline on the Range, 14x9½
27—Disputed Trail, 11x14
28—Dangerous Cripple, 14x9½
29—In The Wake of The Buffalo Runners, 10x8
30—Early American, 13⅜x9½
31—Elk in Lake McDonald, 11x8½
32—First Furrow, 8x12
33—First Wagon Tracks, 15x8½
34—Finding the Trail, 13½x9½
35—Heads or Tails, 15x8½
36—Heading the Right Way, 13½x9½
37—The Cattle Drive, 13½x9½
38—Women of the Plains, 8x6
39—Invocation To The Sun, 13½x9¼
40—Indian Love Call, 13½x9¼
41—Jerked Down, 15x8½
42—The Jerkline, 14x9½
43—Loops & Swift Horses Are Surer Than Lead, 10½x7
44—Last of the Herd, 15x8½
45—Last Chance or Bust, 12½x8
46—Mad Cow, 12x8
47—Wagons Westward, 13½x9½
48—The Challenge, 10½x8½
49—When Arrows Spell Death, 9x7
50—Old Fashioned Stage Coach, 10x7
51—At the End of the Rope, 10½x7
52—Prospectors, 10½x8
53—Planning the Attack, 14x10
54—Pipe of Peace, 14x7
55—Who Killed the Bear?, 13½x7
56—Queen's War Hounds, 14x9½
57—Rainy Morning in a Cow Camp, 11x8¼
58—Roping a Grizzly, 11x8½
59—Red Man's Wireless, 14x7
60—Roping a Wolf, 11x8¼
61—Smoking Them Out, 11x10
62—Scattering the Riders, 11½x8
63—Strenuous Life, 14x10
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65—Serious Predicament, 15x8½
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80—Two of a Kind Win, 13½x9½
81—Last of 5,000, 8x9½
82—When Tracks Spell Meat, 13½x9½
83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of a Man, 13½x9½
84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 11x14
85—Wild Horse Hunters (cowboys), 14x9
86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 12½x8
87—Whose Meat?, 13½x9½
88—Wagon Boss, 16x9½
89—When Mules Wear Diamonds, 13½x9½
90—A Crow Chief, 7x9
91—Innocent Allies, 14x9½
92—Where Ignorance is Bliss, 10½x6 (Cartoon)
93—When Sioux & Blackfeet Meet, 15x8½
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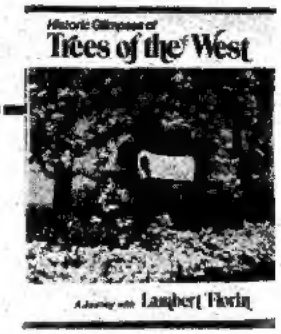

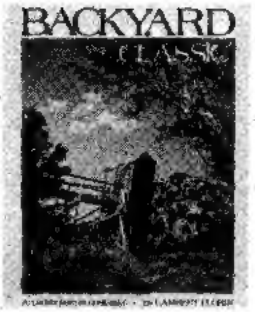

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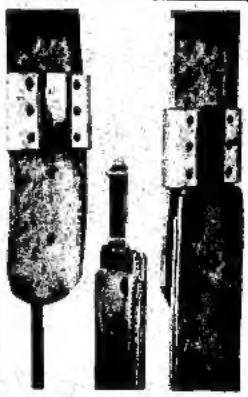

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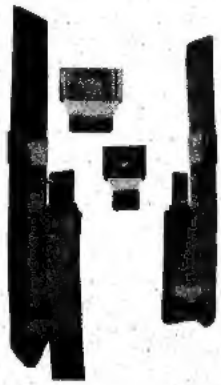

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November-December, 1977
Vol. 25, No. 2
Whole No. 144

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of The Real West!

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country." ——— The late Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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Cover: John Cox
Fingers Crossed and Prayin'

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DIRTY, LOWDOWN POLECATS!

THIS LITTLE PIECE is going to be about mistakes—unintentional, but mistakes just the same. So you folks who have never made one, be sure and don't read this—just flap your wings and turn the page!

An unintentional mistake is like getting shot accidentally by your best friend. He didn't go to do it but you are just as dead anyhow—maybe deader because he hurt your feelings besides! Misunderstanding plays the biggest part in the misdoings of that evil monster UNINTENTIONAL MISTAKES. Seems like this old booger is especially active in the mail order business. Often the only mistake is impatience—and you might be surprised how many people are impatient these days.

There was the man in California who wrote our local postmaster a nasty letter, calling us "pirates" and other names not meant to be highly complimentary. This particular case is the most recent so I will start with it. The man had ordered a copy of *The Best of True West* approximately twenty days before he wrote the letter to our postmaster. He didn't bother to write us a letter of inquiry first. The postmaster wrote him that we had hung around these diggings for quite some time and, to his knowledge, hadn't been put in the pen yet for dishonest dealings.

We are generally very patient with this type of person but this letter seemed so uncalled for and was written in such a nasty manner that I wrote the good man to the effect that his letter reminded me of a cartoon we ran once showing a guard with a smoking rifle, a man lying on the ground and the guard asking, "Who *went* there?" I told him that our primary purpose in life is to publish what we hope are good magazines and the next purpose is to get them out to our readers. Keeping them forever in a warehouse would do nothing whatsoever to further our cause. The only use we could make of them that I can think of would be to put our magazines in a shredder, pour cream over them, sprinkle with sugar and see if they could be used for breakfast cereal.

The following may seem silly to some of you but, to a sizable minority, let me assure you—WE HAVE NO USE FOR 1,000,000 MAGAZINES TO BE USED AS KEEPSAKES—*we want you to have the items you order.* If you don't get them, write us. Something has happened—an error on our part or on yours, lost in the mail or a couple of dozen other things that can and do happen. A company that offers anything for sale, then deliberately withholds orders doesn't last long. I have been in the publishing business since 1936 and I plan on staying in it so long as I live. Old Codger, ain't I!

But back to the letter . . . I sent this gentleman another copy by first-class mail with letter enclosed asking him to drop me a note please. Didn't he actually get his original order shortly after he had written the postmaster? I received a very nice three-page letter. Sure enough, he had received his copy in good order shortly after writing the scorching letter. We weren't dirty, lowdown polecats anymore and he was happy about the whole thing.

This story could have been told in two sentences but I told it in detail for a purpose—we run into more trigger-happy folks than you would expect. It could have something to do with the times, with all the consumer reports about ripoffs, etc. but some of these people seem to enjoy kicking the living sawdust out of you and then being sorry you had to go to the hospital as a result of their being a shade fast in figuring you for a gyp.

Some people write, "If that is the way you do business . . ." It is not the way we do business, but the way business does us. YOU BET WE MAKE MISTAKES. Actually, we have the best personnel that we have *ever* had and if you don't think those girls who handle your subscriptions and other orders are dedicated to seeing that you get what you order—well, I really wish you could spend an hour watching them hustle and their utter sincerity and concern in keeping the herd moving in the right direction. But, again, they are human and humans make mistakes.

I subscribe to some of the biggest national magazines in the country. It takes six to eight weeks (and sometimes longer) for me to get my first copy on an initial subscription and then there are mistakes even from the biggest and most efficient companies. I'll tell you one thing, when a computer makes a mistake, it makes a whang-dilly!

Knowing how many things can happen on any given situation, I write the company two to three times to try to get something straightened out and then if I hear nothing, I write them a sort of "Now look here, Pardners . . . . ." type of letter and generally get the trouble remedied—if it takes three months!

I realize this kind of "editorial" may not be goosebump thrilling, but since it will come out just before the dam breaks, I sure hope you will finish reading it. I'd much rather write about interesting, humorous and exciting things but if you will follow me closely here, we won't have one-tenth as much trouble when the dam goes and those gift subscriptions flood

(Continued on page 49)

"Halt! Who went there?"

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1436 "...The forest is quiet and the brook is still..." May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you...

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3051 "...silver day is drifting into magic--Christmas night." May the magic of Christmas be yours

1478 ...What could be better in this chilly weather than to wish Merry Christmas to all that we know!

1319 "...I'll wish for the snowman's nose." A Season of Joy to you, dear friends, etc.

3085 "To have joy one must share it, etc." Wishing you a Christmas Season filled with...Happiness

1146 ...wishing you a rootin' tootin' Christmas and lots of happy times in the New Year to come.

1329 "To have joy one must share it, etc." Wishing you a Christmas Season filled with...Happiness

1435 "A Cowboy's Christmas Prayer" Poem inside May the...Joy of Christmas be with you...all Year

1137 Britches patched...Ol' cow gone dry. Both horses lame, But Merry Christmas just the same!

1216 "...may the Great Spirit bless all, etc." With Best Wishes for Christmas and all the New Year

1479 "Take Time to See" Nature poem inside Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

1334 "To those we love and...all good friends, etc." Merry Christmas from the two of us!

1151 "...the fair, And open face of heaven,..." May every happiness be yours at Christmas, etc.

1332 ...here's the proof our hearts can holler 'Merry Christmas'--for less than a dollar!

1466 ...Never too deep the snow, To wish you the Merriest Christmas our good Lord can bestow!

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1304 "May the trail rise up to meet you, etc." Merry Christmas and...a Happy New Year

3097 Nature's Cathedral May there come to you at this holiday...Health, Happiness and...Friendships

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1337 "There is a destiny that makes us brothers, etc." Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

3040 "...face to face with creatures sublime, etc." Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

1367 ...May your blessings be more, Than you've ever hoped for, And your Christmas a warmth, etc.

1338 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside...And Good Health throughout the New Year

1444 "...Christ's humble birth, etc." Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Happiness through...the Year

1442 ...God bless and keep you, and... May you have a Merry Christmas in the good old-fashioned way!

1440 ...with...that brand of Western cheer. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Hoopdeedoo New Year

1230 Surprise on the Trail To wish you a Merry Christmas and a New Year chuck full of Happiness

1447 "I come to my solitary woodland walk..." With Best Wishes for Christmas and all the New Year

1345 "Greetings..." With Best Wishes at Christmas and Happiness through all the Coming Year

3084 "Where forests rustle, etc." May there come to you...Health, Happiness and Enduring Friendships

3078 "Thou art here—thou fill'st the solitude, etc." Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

1448 "...It's time to greet, The friends it's nice to know!" Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

1472 A Christmas Surprise May the miracle of Christmas fill your hearts...the whole year through

1455 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, Peace...And Good Health throughout the New Year

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An Unexpected Meeting

As a kid I had the pleasure of knowing a fellow who was one of the last of a breed of old-time cowboy, horse breaker, and all-around ranch hand. He was always "Uncle Robert" to me and was married to my Aunt Jane. I believe he had been born shortly after the Civil War and grew up in Central Texas.

Raised on a horse, he had handled every kind of outlaw bronc and, on finding he had the knack of staying aboard most of them, hired out to various ranches to handle the rough string. My aunt was an excellent cook so during their married life they held down two jobs—cooking for the ranch hands and horse breaking. I am sorry I am unable to remember the brands they worked for in West Texas but that, like a lot of other childish memories, has vanished completely.

The story I do remember is one that unfolded during a family reunion some time in the '20s. A large group of relatives had gathered at Uncle Robert's home in Wingate which is in Runnels County. As the women were preparing food for the get-together, some of the men retired to the shade trees in the yard and began relating stories of bygone years. Uncle Robert was quite a talker and yarn spinner so he began telling of an incident that had happened to him when he was a youth and working on a ranch near the border of Old Mexico.

He said one evening the foreman told all the cowboys to saddle up and head for the river. On arriving there they settled down to wait for darkness and moonrise. Just before midnight a herd of cattle started making its way across the Rio Grande toward the American side. When the cattle were across, the foreman handed some money to one of the men who brought them over, and the cowboys quickly took charge. The herd was moved to their ranch headquarters, branded and scattered out in the various pastures that made up the sprawling ranch.

As he finished the story an old fellow (who was also named Bob and who had married into the family) spoke up and asked, "Was there a fellow on a white horse who stayed at the edge of the herd and never came up close to the others?"

Uncle Robert was surprised and answered quickly, "There sure was—but how did you know?"

The man replied with a smile, "I was the man on the white horse. We had stolen that herd in Mexico and I was the lookout man!"

It was quite an occasion—two old ex-cowboys who had never met since that moonlit night on the Rio Grande many years before.—Frank V. Hash, Box 136, Rogers, Texas 76569.

Scairt!

About fifty years ago four of us kids rode up to an abandoned ranch-house in Idaho close to Border, Wyoming. We were in our early teens, the two Bagley boys, and me and my kid brother Sam. The house was supposed to be haunted due to a murder that happened there. Our mission was to dig some horseradish that grew in the front yard. After a lot of hard labor; we dug up half a sack and tied it and the shovel to a couple of the saddles. Then we decided to check out this haunted house, a two-story affair, with all windows boarded up.

The front door was not locked, so we walked right in. The only light came in through the cracks. We checked all the lower rooms, and decided to check the upstairs, up the back stairway. As soon as we got to the top of the stairs, in pitch black, something good-size started moving around up there. We came down the stairs four at a time, across the house, out through the front door, and jumped off the high porch, across the yard and over the fence. I wasn't scared or nothing, so I jumped clear over my horse and landed on the other side, and his name was Big Red. I wasn't even that scared at Omaha Beach on D-Day, or was I?

We galloped away a mile to the river, where after a long, lengthy debate (of two seconds), we went swimming, and hunted crawdads.

Why don't you start sending me *True West*, and bill me for same?—George E. Duvall, 3656 West 66th Place, Chicago, Illinois, 60629.

OK—We'll Run Maps

It takes me some time to act but once I get going I do rattle on, however I'll try to ramble short.

Something has been bothering me for two or three years now. I've been reading your "rags" for lo these many years and every time I get hold of a story I just get plumb discombobulated if there isn't a map to help me get my teeth into the plot. A good many of the tales do have maps, but wouldn't it be possible to ask all the authors to put in a sketch

(Continued on page 53)

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"CRAZY" THE

By LANGFORD JOHNSTON as told to EVE BALL

Photos Courtesy Langford Johnston

WHEN WORD of the discovery of gold on the American River in California reached the Mexican state of Sonora, many of its people hurried across the border. A descendant of one, Mrs. Ruth Parra, said that the trails in 1849 and during the early fifties were so nearly impassable for *carretas* that the majority of gold seekers used pack mules for transportation. From San Diego they had traveled north over Cottonwood Pass up the San Joaquin Valley and on to Hornitos and Sonora, California.

Those Mexicans who reached Sonora began mining with considerable success until some of the northern miners whose claims did not pan out, levied a tax of twenty dollars a month on them. After this, many of the Mexicans turned back to Hornitos where they opened gambling halls and saloons. They found it much more profitable than mining.

In 1852 another group from Mexico arrived and with them a pretty young girl, Mariana Andrada. There is no record of any of her family's having been with the emigrants; it is not even possible to determine where she first lived, but in all probability she was with friends and was chaperoned as was the Mexican custom.

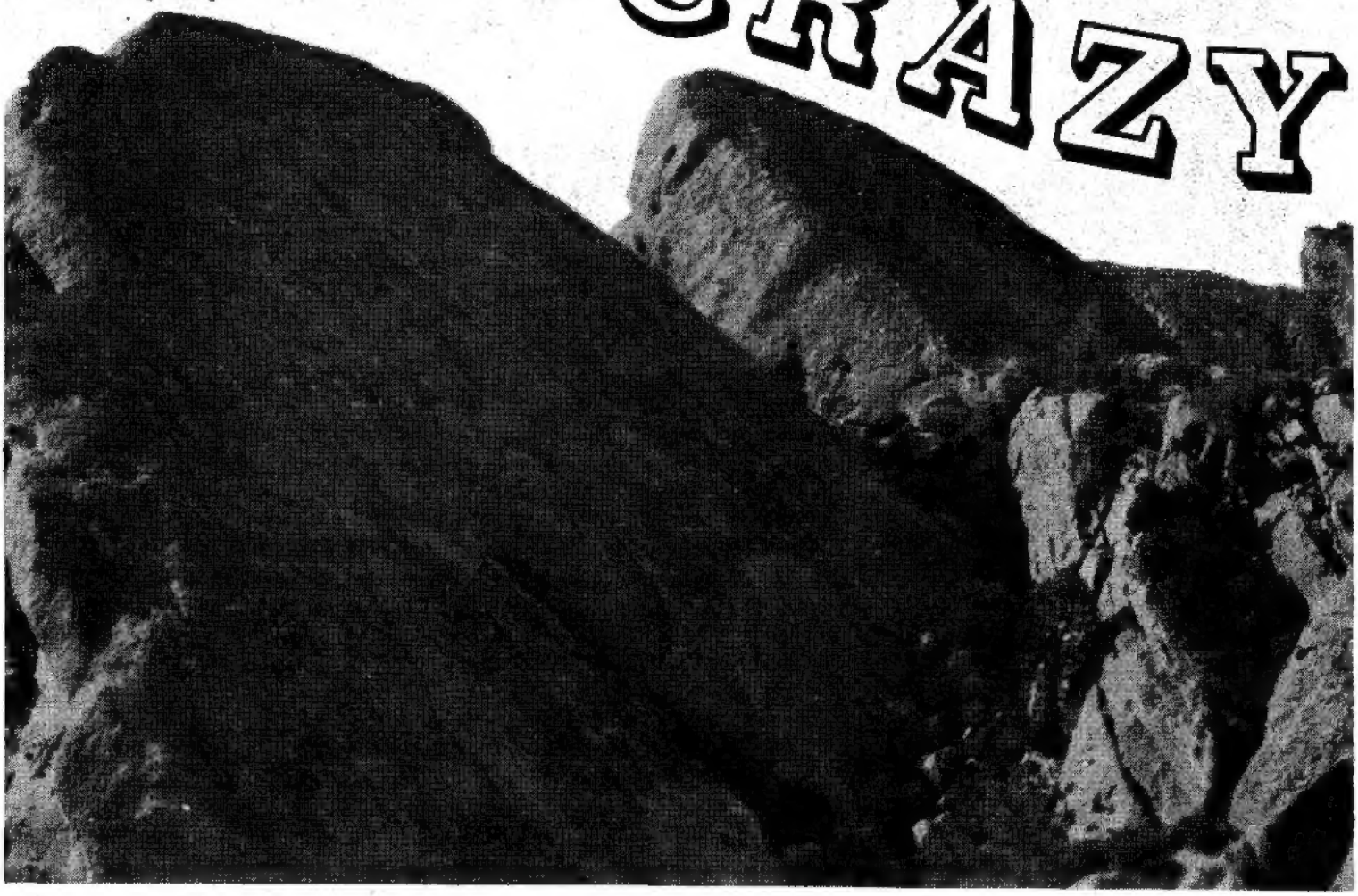
The first mention of her places Mariana at Hornitos. It was necessary for her to have employment, and she became a dance hall girl.

At that time there was no settlement in San Joaquin Valley. Fresno City was not started until 1852 and then by a group of sheepherders. It is unlikely that Mariana would have thrown in with one of them when she could have had her choice of the men in Hornitos.

She was next heard of in the dance halls of New Idria, the quicksilver mining town which was founded in 1853 in San Benito County, adjoining Fresno County. Evidently she did not arrive there until after July 25, 1853, for that was the day the Rangers killed Joaquin Murietta at Cantua Creek.

Mariana immediately claimed to be the common-law wife of Murietta, though she had not done so during his life. There was no proof either to substantiate or to refute her claim. It is quite possible that she met Murietta at Hornitos, for he was known to frequent the place. From the summer of 1853 until the day she died Mariana proudly asserted that Joaquin Murietta was her husband and that he was a kind and indulgent one.

FOR seven years following his death little is known of Mariana or her movements but in 1860 she had her photograph made, a tintype, and it is the only authenticated one in existence. Ruth Lucy Parra of Los Gatos Creek graciously permitted me to copy it. It shows a scar on her left cheek, running from under her ear almost to the corner of her mouth. Reportedly the scar was the result of a fight with another dance hall girl, but Mariana asserted that Murietta had stabbed her, though nobody took her seriously. She was known to have "held her own" against other



Below, Joaquin Rocks as seen from the east side. Mariana would climb to the top of the center rock to preach to her followers. The rocks were named after Joaquin Murietta, the bandit, who is reputed to have used the center rock as a lookout point for travelers on the plains. Tales of buried gold cached by Murietta high in the rocks were believed by many.

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girls, and the story of her having received the scar from such an embroilment seems probable.

According to Mrs. Parra's information, Mariana was thirty years old when the tintype was made. She had taken on much weight. She was beginning to lose favor in her chosen and ancient profession. She had either married or "taken up" with a sheepherder on Cantua Creek.

The next record of her whereabouts is during 1869 or '70 when she was camp tender for a Mexican sheepherder at Martinez Spring south of Cantua Creek. Just above the place lies a long ridge of the Coast Range. On top of the mountain are three large rocks, visible on clear days for fifty miles. It was believed that Joaquin Murietta had buried some of his stolen loot there. One day while the sheepherder was with his flock Mariana climbed to the magnificent rocks to look for the gold Murietta reportedly had cached. (That old treasure story still persists, and many visit the area every year to hunt for the buried fortune.)

Murietta and his gang were supposed to have retreated to this hide-out when officers were closing in on them. The middle rock slopes from east to west and a person can climb it easily. On its slope is a big hole ten or twelve feet deep that always holds water. Now that it has moss and trash in it, the water is probably unfit for drinking, and because it is rain water it might be unpalatable; but in Murietta's day, water was water and meant the difference between life and death.

It was said that Murietta and his men used this middle rock also as a look-out for travelers on the plains. When they saw the dust of wagons or pack outfits they rode down to rob and steal. Consequently early settlers dubbed them the Joaquin Rocks. They were also termed the Monuments.

On her first visit there Mariana had climbed the middle one and looked out to the west; then she turned to the east and could see the Sierra Nevada. The west side of the Monuments is perpendicular, and about a hundred feet high.

Old-timers believed that Mariana first laid her plans to become a prophetess while standing on the middle rock. If so, the plans were ambitious ones for she had no hesitancy in announcing that she was chosen to be the Savior of Mankind. The sloping rock made a perfect

Mariana, La Loca progressed from silver camp dancehall girl to High Priestess of Joaquin Rocks — a frightening woman, for sure!

ONE"

Mariana Andrada, later known as Mariana, La Loca ("The Crazy One"). This is the only known photo of Mariana in existence, taken when she was about 30 years old.

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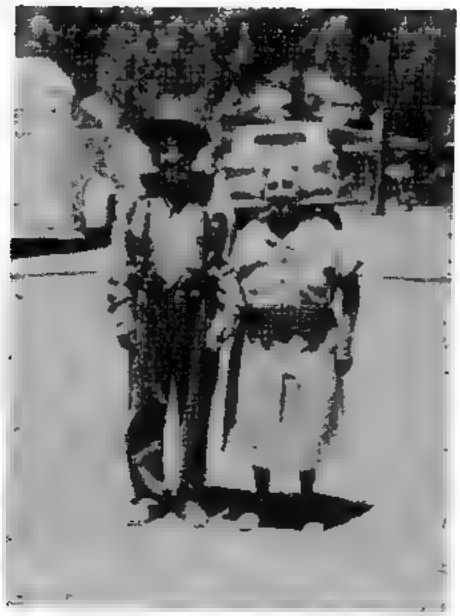


Above, N. M. Parra and wife, Ruth Lucy Parra, of Los Gatos Creeks, New Mexico knew Mariana. Mr. Parra is 94 years of age, his wife 84. Below, Langford R. Johnston in 1873.

A now dry spring where Mariana got water for her home at the "Rocks." Bottom of page, Joaquin Rocks as viewed from the plains to the east. They are part of what is called Joaquin Ridge.

pulpit and she could look down on a little clearing of about twenty acres, studded with pines and oak. It was here on this rock that she had dreams of preaching to hundreds of weary and misguided souls and urging them to come to the Rocks to be saved lest they perish in the flood and flame that was to envelop all the earth except that one sacred spot.

THERE are marked differences in the stories handed down through the years, but most agree that Mariana started her great revival meeting in 1880. With a handful of followers she retreated to the Rocks and built a house about a half-mile west on a little knoll. It had a fireplace and a wonderful panoramic view. Its great disadvantage was that its source of water, a spring, was 150 yards below the cabin. So Mariana put a high fence around the spring, with a padlock on the gate, and she charged for water.

At first her sermons were poorly attended. She did not speak English very well but she had a marvelous command of Spanish and preached with the fervor of a professional evangelist. She held her small audiences spellbound.

Word-of-mouth advertising, however, was as potent then as it is today, and soon Mariana was exhorting the throngs who came to jeer but remained to pray. Many returned to lay their money and other valuables at her feet. People by the hundreds camped below the top of the ridge; and they paid for water for themselves and their animals. One nearby rancher slaughtered thirty head of cattle and gave the proceeds to the Propheteas. At last his wife tired of this generosity and devotion to Mariana and told him that she would get a divorce, keep the ranch and cattle, and that he could go and live at The Rocks. That must have sobered him, for he never gave Mariana any more cattle or money.

Courtesy Melvin Mauley

Courtesy Melvin Mauley

Above, Joaquin Rocks as seen from the west. One of Mariana's followers jumped to her death from the center rock.

She claimed that a famous priest (Father Mahin) who died a century before, had showed up at the Rocks, and that she communicated with him every day, but she emphasized that only a true believer could see the venerable priest. She also insisted that only people of Latin descent were welcome to try; that included not only Mexican, but Portuguese, French and Basques. One doubting Thomas voiced the suspicion that Mariana disguised herself in a robe and impersonated Father Mahin, the apparition.

Sometimes before Mariana ascended the rock to preach, she and her followers would stop at the base and pray for as long as an hour. There was no doubt that many, many people had absolute faith in her and in her promises for their hereafter. They even vied with one another in proving themselves to be her greatest believers.

An eighteen-year-old girl told Mariana that she (the girl) was Mariana's truest and most devout disciple, and that she wanted to prove her faith. The Prophetess replied that if she believed in her (Mariana), and in God strongly enough, she could climb the big rock and jump off without being hurt. The next day in the presence of hundreds of worshipers the girl climbed to the sheer face of the pinnacle, raised her hands to heaven, and prayed for some time. Then she walked off into space.

When they reached the girl she was dead. Almost every bone in her body was broken. No official was notified. The girl's body was buried, and it was many years before anyone who witnessed the tragedy admitted having knowledge of her strange disappearance.

MARIANA'S inability to perform the miracle caused a defection in the number and ardor of her followers. To

(Continued on page 53)

Below, photo on left shows the site of Mariana's cabin located west of the Rocks. Photo on right shows her dagger which was discovered in the ruins of her burned cabin.

THE WEST'S BEST HIDDEN HORROR

By GLADYS RODEHAVER
Photos Courtesy Author

— Interview with Jim Gilliland's niece

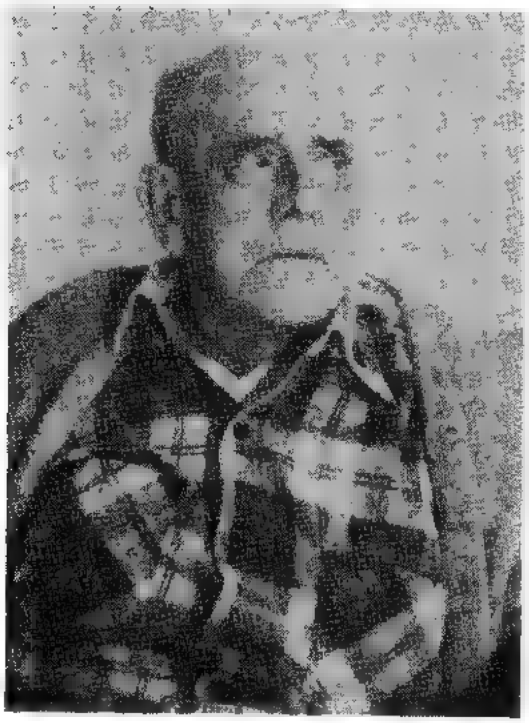
JIM GILLILAND'S name appears prominently in all accounts of the Colonel A. J. Fountain mystery of 1896. Gilliland was tried at Hillsboro, New Mexico, along with Oliver Lee and Bill McNew, for the murder of Fountain and his eight-year-old son Henry. All were acquitted. Jim's sister, Lucy Gilliland Raley, has also been mentioned frequently in stories that have been written about this famous case.

Mary Wright, Lucy's daughter, is living today in a sunny little house in a New Mexico community with her husband, Ellis. Before their retirement, the Wrights owned a store and warehouse at Red Rock. She was the postmistress there, was the Red Rock news reporter for the Silver City *Enterprise*, and also wrote for a Columbus newspaper owned at that time by the well-known publisher, Bill McGaw.

Mary Wright in 1974.

Mary, born in 1902 and Lucy's first child, had four sisters and two brothers. Lucy was destined to raise these children by herself, as best she could, on their ranch just outside the little town of Oro Grande [Orogrande], New Mexico.

"My father, Bob Raley, was killed in 1915 when I was thirteen years old," Mary tells. "He and Bill McNew had had trouble. I don't know what it was about and I doubt if they knew—over horses or something—there were lots of feuds in those days. Papa had taken a shot at Bill in a saloon; he didn't hit him but the bullet was close enough to leave powder burns. They took my father up to jail and he stayed there all summer. They had the trial that fall and he was turned loose.



"On the day Papa was killed he was going into the telegraph office in the post office at Oro Grande to send a telegram to his attorney in Alamogordo. Bill McNew, who was inside, took a shot at him through the glass door and my father just dropped. My mother was with him. As he fell she grabbed him and it jerked her down and another bullet went right past her neck.

"My father was armed and she started to pick up his gun, but Bill said, 'Don't touch it, Lucy, if you do I'll kill you.' She knew he meant it and she thought about her children who were still small and she knew that there would be nobody to take care of them."

Ellis Wright spoke up, "It was a good thing that old Bill didn't kill her for if he had, Jim Gilliland would've eat him up like a turnip!"

MARY continued, "The telegraph office and post office were in the Colthorpe home. Colthorpe was the postmaster. There may have been a telephone there, but I never heard that they were called to the telephone as a ruse, as some accounts say, although it could have been; however, that is not the story as I remember it.

"In those days, if it wasn't for your friends and neighbors in time of trouble, you would be in a bad fix. Mr. Vorhees, who drove the school bus, got the bus and drove my father's body and my

At left, Ellis Wright in 1974. Below, Albert J. Fountain who mysteriously disappeared with his son.

Courtesy Museum of New Mexico

mother to our home. There were no undertakers, so Mr. Vorhees and the telegrapher at the depot laid my father out and got him ready for burial. They buried him at Oro Grande the next day.

"The mine workers were mostly Mexican, and as my father lived in Mexico for twenty years, he spoke the language fluently. He got along with them very well and had taken care of a number of them who had been injured in the mine. They worked for a dollar a day, ten hours a day, and when they got hurt the property owners didn't take care of them.

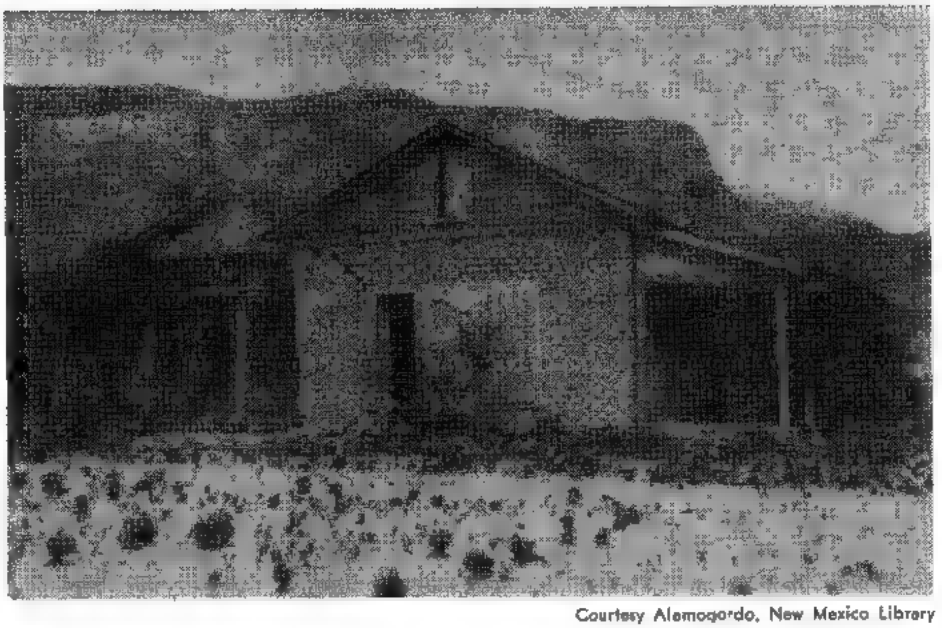
"On the day my father was buried

Courtesy Rio Grande Historical Collection, Alamogordo, New Mexico Library

they were told to work as usual, but when the whistle blew no one showed up and those Mexicans all got in a gang and walked from Brice—up in the hills where the mines were—to Oro Grande to the funeral. One of the Mexican women in Oro Grande raised cosmos and she picked huge bouquets of them and they were the only flowers at the funeral.

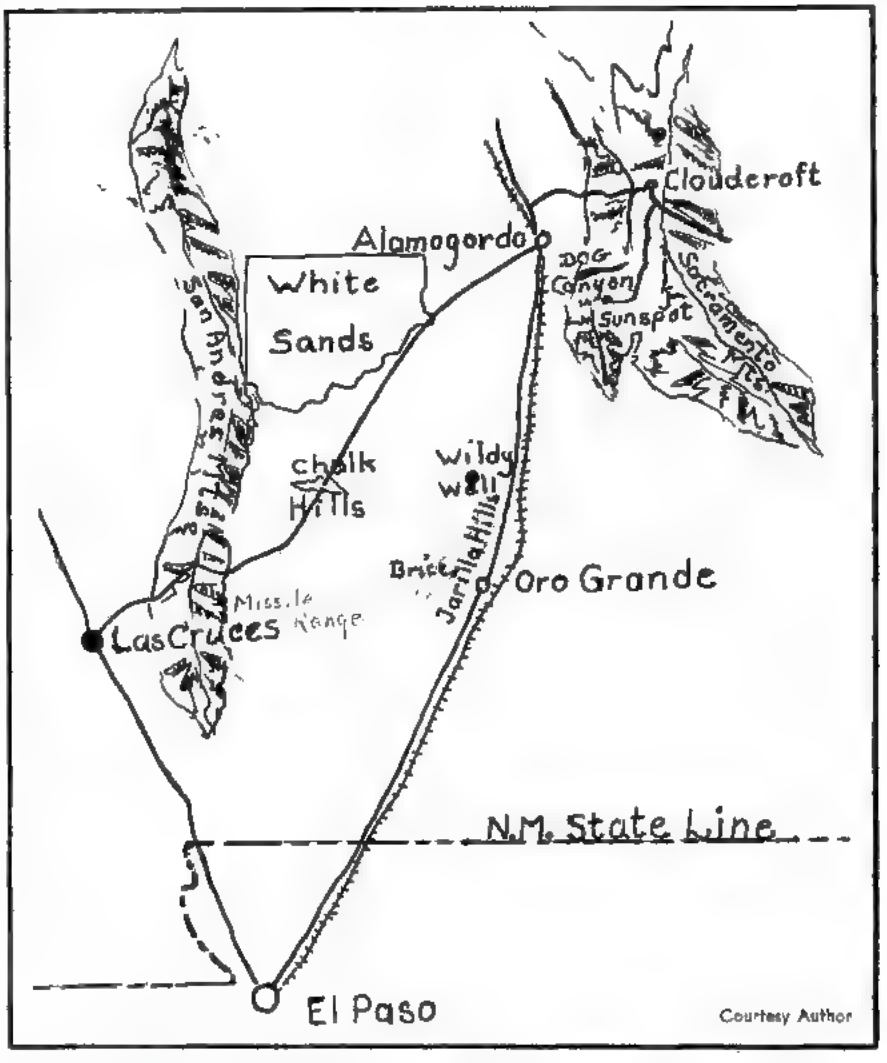
"Bill McNew was given a trial in Alamogordo for killing my father but he was acquitted, probably pleading self-defense; however, my father didn't even know McNew was at the post office when he went there, and he was shot before he got to the door.

"At the time Bill McNew shot my father he was a rich cattleman—he was



Courtesy Alamogordo, New Mexico Library

Above. Oliver Lee's ranch house at the mouth of Dog Canyon. At left, Oliver Lee.



flourishing—but later on he lost everything. When he started going downhill he left his wife, and then his sons turned against him. A Mexican woman took care of him in Alamogordo until he got very low and then Mrs. McNew, who was a wonderful woman—my mother liked her real well—finally took care of him until he died.

"My mother didn't want my brothers to associate with the McNew boys, but

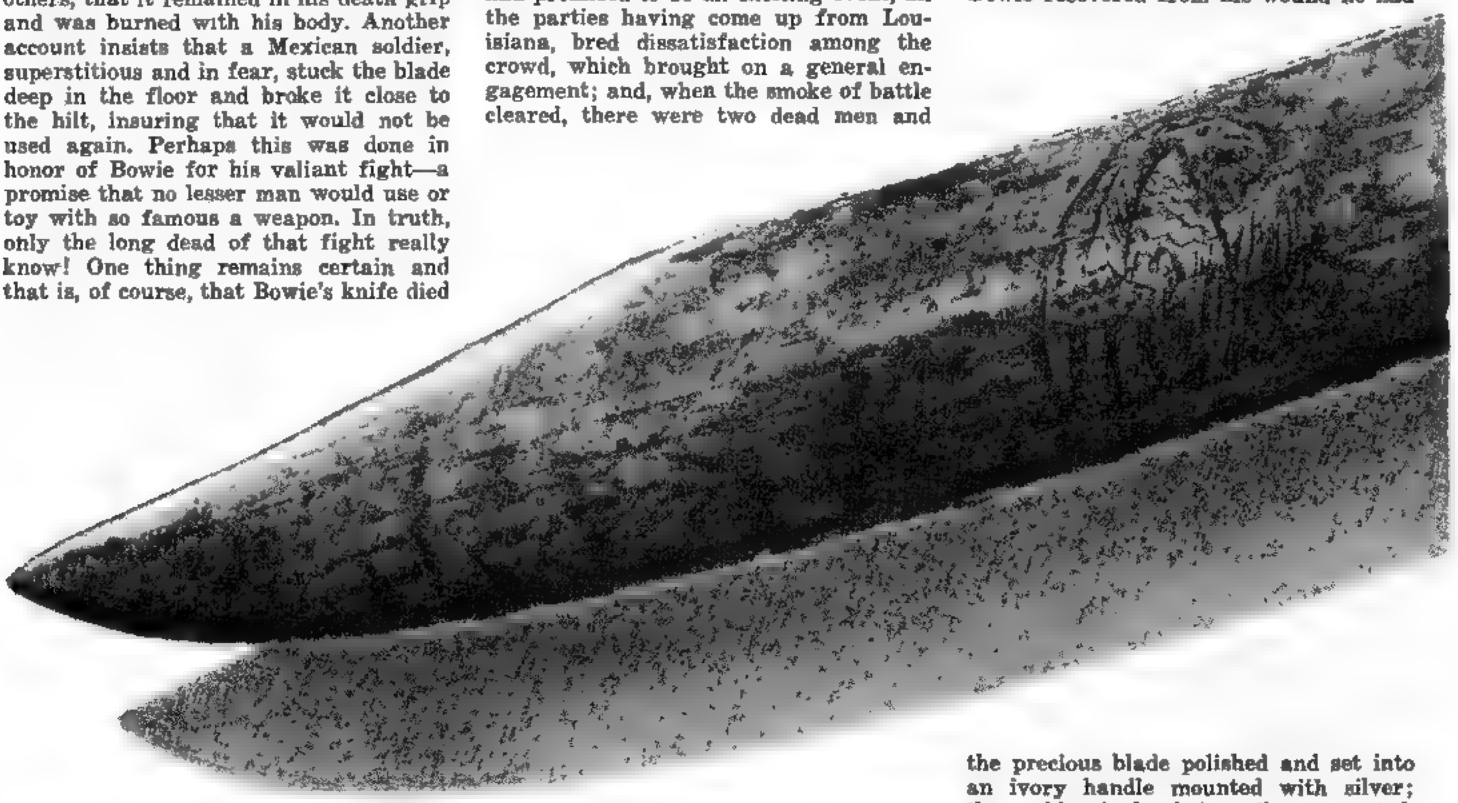
(Continued on page 46)

SMITHWICK'S

By BOB THOMAS
Photo Courtesy Author

Illustrations by Chad Nell

WHETHER Bowie's bloody knife slipped from his hand as he died in the dimly lit room that was his last battleground at the Alamo, is really not known. Some say that the awful blade remained embedded in his last assailant; others, that it remained in his death grip and was burned with his body. Another account insists that a Mexican soldier, superstitious and in fear, stuck the blade deep in the floor and broke it close to the hilt, insuring that it would not be used again. Perhaps this was done in honor of Bowie for his valiant fight—a promise that no lesser man would use or toy with so famous a weapon. In truth, only the long dead of that fight really know! One thing remains certain and that is, of course, that Bowie's knife died with him in some way on that fateful day at the Alamo.



From that time forward the quest for a genuine Bowie knife has continued. In fact, the quest began before Bowie entered the Alamo and is a tale unto itself. Noah Smithwick was a contemporary of Jim Bowie and knew him before Bowie made his first trip to Texas. In Smithwick's book, *The Evolution of a State*, published by H. P. N. Grammel in 1900 in Austin, Texas, Smithwick describes his association: "My relation with him [Bowie] dated back to 1828, when he made his appearance in San Felipe de Austin (about a year after the famous encounter which established his character as a fighter and made the reputation of the Bowie knife). The encounter referenced to was a free-for-all fight on a sand bar in the Mississippi fronting Natchez; the initial skirmish being a duel in which the principals, Major Wright and Dr. Maddox, after having vindicated their honor by the exchange of harmless shots, shook hands across the bloodless chasm.

"This tame ending of an affair which had promised to be an exciting event, all the parties having come up from Louisiana, bred dissatisfaction among the crowd, which brought on a general engagement; and, when the smoke of battle cleared, there were two dead men and two wounded. The details of the fight as I remember them were that General Cuney, with Jim Bowie as his second, personally challenged Colonel Crane; whereupon Crane whipped out two pistols, discharging them simultaneously, killing Cuney and wounding Bowie, after which he turned and ran. Bowie drew his knife—the only weapon he had—and started in pursuit but fell. Before he could rise, Major Wright rushed up and attempted to stab him with a sword cane. Bowie caught the cane and, jerking Wright toward him, with a tremendous sweep of his knife cleft him clear through the abdomen to the back-bone, the mangled bowels pouring out upon Bowie, who was sitting on the ground. Seeing the horrible fate that had befallen his friend, Alfred Blanchard, also armed with a sword cane, ran up to avenge him. Shooting out his long arm Bowie slashed Blanchard across the abdomen, disemboweling him.

"The blood-christened weapon which saved its owner's life twice within a few seconds, was an ordinary affair with a plain wooden handle, but when Bowie recovered from his wound he had the precious blade polished and set into an ivory handle mounted with silver; the scabbard also being silver mounted. Not wishing to degrade it by ordinary use, he brought the knife to me in San Felipe to have a duplicate made. The blade was about ten inches long and two broad at the widest part. When it became known that I was making a genuine Bowie knife, there was a great demand for them, so I cut a pattern and started a factory, my jobs bringing all the way from $5.00 to $20.00 according to finish."

The Noah Smithwick version of the Bowie knife was the first identical copy ever made and obviously the last. He makes no mention of the number produced or in what way he marked his handiwork. These knives could well have been used in some quantity in the Texas fight for independence. In any event, it is assumed that any of the Smithwick knives in existence would have great value.

BOWIE KNIFE

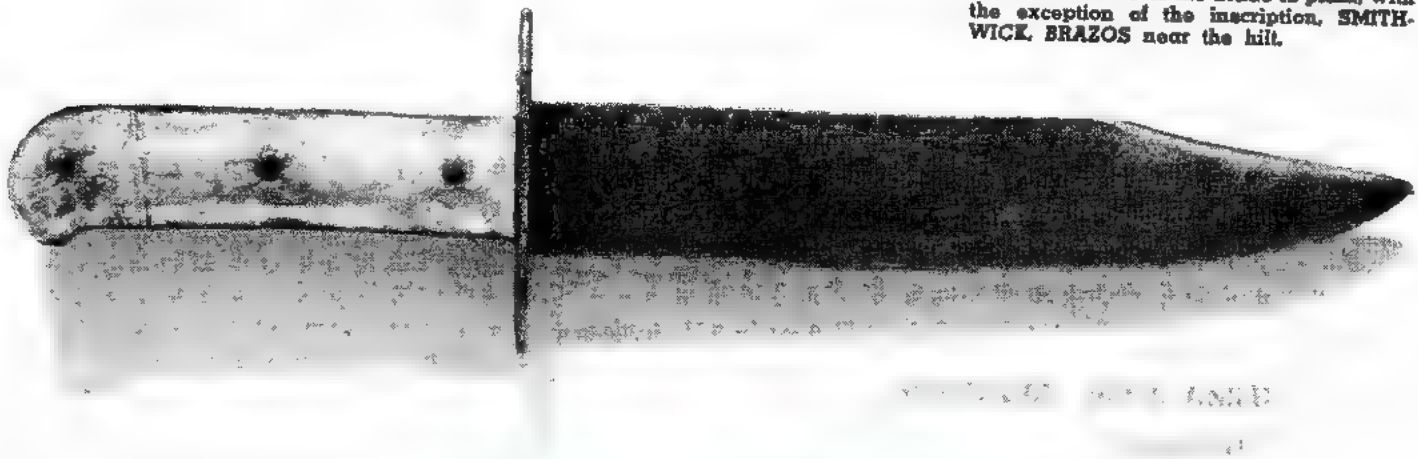
Artist's rendering of the Smithwick Bowie knife. This was one of the "deluxe" models, indicated by the ornamentation etched into the blade.

What's better treasure than gold? Something that gold can't buy!

DURING my student days at the University of Texas, I carried a number of extra jobs and possessed a deep interest in state history. One day on my way to work, I stopped off at a second-hand store on Red River Street, an area of Austin well known for its bargain goods. In front of this particular shop the dealer had several bushel baskets of old books he claimed to have bought from an attic clean-up man. His price was fifty cents per basket. I bought one basket, loaded them, and went on to work.

That night I looked over the books and was pleased when I found some really good volumes. Among them was a first edition of Noah Smithwick's *The Evolution of a State* which is still recognized as a primary source book used widely by serious scholars and often quoted in school texts. Although Smithwick was advanced in years when he dictated the book there can be no doubt that he was a close observer, an active participant in his time, and a well respected figure in early Texas.

It was some years later while I was teaching Texas history in a border town in deep South Texas that I remembered



The reverse side of the blade is plain, with the exception of the inscription, SMITHWICK, BRAZOS near the hilt.

the old Smithwick book. This was occasioned by a news story and magazine article concerning a newspaper reporter named Mason who was delving into a powerful and dangerous South Texas political group. Mason was threatened and, I believe, was forced to remove his trousers at gunpoint on a downtown sidewalk by a group of rowdies headed by a man named Smithwick. Later Mason was shot down in a final effort at closing his mouth.

Smithwick was convicted of the murder and was sent to Huntsville prison, and a still later article announced this Smithwick's suicide by hanging. The article concluded that whatever else was known of the man he was at least a great contortionist as one inmate stated that when he first saw the dead body the hands were securely bound behind his back. The name Smithwick in these articles interested me because it was an unusual name for a Mexican-American, as he was reported to be.

In teaching "history" it has always seemed to me that students find it more believable and enjoyable if it is approached through the study of people living and acting in the circumstances of their time. Always students are admonished to remember that their ancestors were *on the scene* in all written history. During the study of Texas history one year, my class was busy with the study of Texas people during their fight for independence from Mexico. Numbers of interesting articles were brought to class and discussed.

One boy, whose name was Smithwick, and beyond doubt was Spanish-speaking, came in with an article wrapped up in a fragment of a very old Mexican blanket. The boy handled the article with great care—never letting it out of his hand though he did allow his classmates to look and touch his prize as he brought it to my desk. Then with care he unfolded the blanket wrapping and showed me a great knife.

At first glance I thought I was viewing a Mexican-made knife much like those displayed across the border as curios but older and larger than the ones hawked to tourists. It had an etched Mexican eagle on the blade but the outline was very dim. The handles were of bone and at the back of the handle was a groove, perhaps for a thong to secure the knife to the wrist in the manner of the *machete*. I did notice a maker's name close by the hilt of the knife so I rubbed away until I could make out the name—it was there—the name was SMITHWICK!

MY MIND flooded with the Noah Smithwick book and his account of the knives he had made. I was so taken aback, I probably startled the student. By now I knew that my first judgment was dead wrong and I began to study the knife in detail.

Slightly under the name Smithwick stamped in the blade was the word BRAZOS. This could only mean that it was the location of the maker—San Felipe de Austin on the Brazos River. What I had taken for the traditional Mexican eagle was not an eagle at all but rather an American shield—dim, but with stars. The blade measured slightly over ten inches in length and was two inches at the hilt. The handle was a full six inches, set with bone handles much aged, with three rivets spaced two and a quarter inches apart from the center. The top of the blade from the point was curved back slightly over three inches, and edged. There was no doubt that I was holding a genuine Smithwick Bowie—a most beautiful specimen of Noah's handiwork—the ornate $20.00 job he mentioned in his book.

My attention went to the boy and I inquired as calmly as I could about the knife, because he was somewhat undone by all my excitement over his "article." He explained that the knife had been in his family always and that it had come down from his great-grandfather and was always kept in the old trunk at his home. His grandmother had told him that the knife was very old and was made by someone in his family years ago.

(Continued on page 46)

The Smithwick Bowie knife was really a "fistful," as is shown in this photo of the weapon next to a one-foot ruler.

TO UNZ OR
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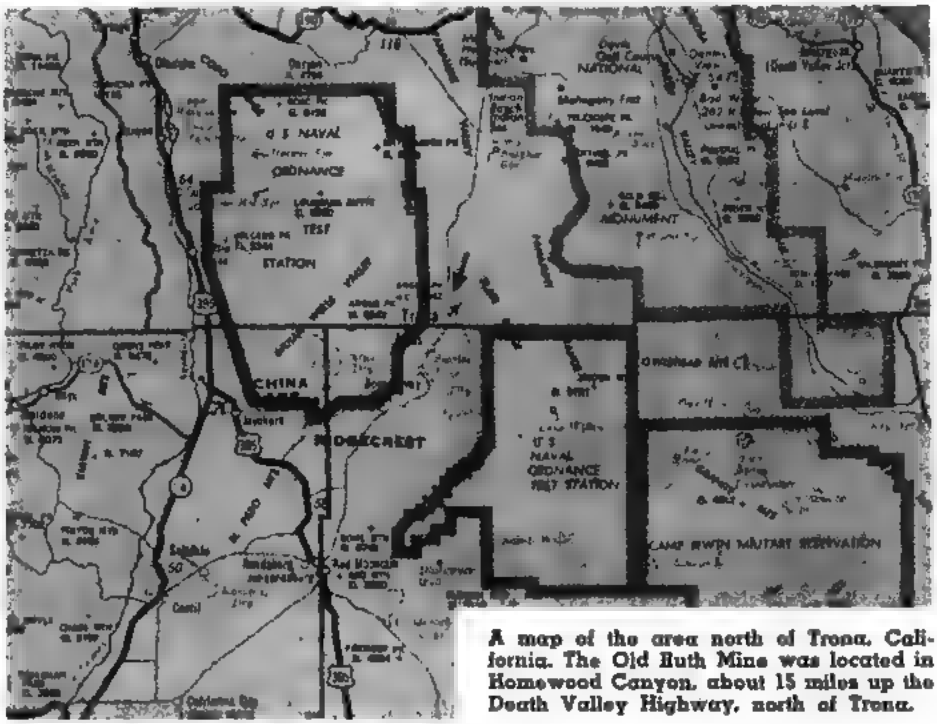
TRAMP MINERS

By HOOD RIVER BLACKIE

Photo Courtesy Author

Montana Red



A map of the area north of Trona, California. The Old Ruth Mine was located in Homewood Canyon, about 15 miles up the Death Valley Highway, north of Trona.

ONE of the wandering Americans who never seems to get much mention in stories of the Old West is the tramp miner. Yet without him there could hardly have been a Virginia City, Leadville or any of the other boom towns you read so much about.

Much is made of who was present at such and such a strike, like famous gunfighters, gamblers, promoters and yes, even madams and their girls. But you can bet your bottom dollar that somewhere in one of the gulches outside of the new town would be a group of tramp miners cooking up a stew and discussing the wage offers from different mines. They didn't make much of a splash in the West as far as glamorous tales and fame, but they certainly did go down under the ground and do the dirty work of mining.

In the early years of Western mining it was a very dangerous and hard job. There were no pneumatic hammers to drill holes for "powder." (Powder indeed it was before dynamite came along.) There was a sledge hammer in the hands of one man and a drill steel held by another, and I know from having drilled this way myself that the guy holding the drill is hoping the one with the double jack (hammer) does not have too big a hangover.

In the early years there were no mining inspectors so men worked without dust masks in poor light with little or no ventilation, and poor timbering; as a result the cemeteries in the old mining towns are full of miners.

It was easy to get a job. There was no physical examination, no request for a record of your education and work experience. You just went up and told them you were a miner and needed a job and that was all there was to it.

Some mines got reputations as being hard to work at. They might be well known as dangerous, or perhaps had trouble making payrolls, or the shifters (bosses) were hard to get along with. One I recall being mentioned as having three work crews—one on duty, one coming, and one going.

Tramp miners, like the hoboes, had their grapevine of surprisingly accurate information and they always seemed to know which mines to steer clear of. And in fact many of them did at times ride the rails and jungle up with the hoboes, but they were different from the true hobo in that they didn't seem to live as long and on the average were much heavier drinkers.

WHEN I was tramping around years ago I used to quite often run into these wandering miners and I recall my own brief venture into their ranks. It was shortly after World War II and an attempt was being made to reopen the old Ruth Mine in Homewood Canyon about fifteen miles or so up the Death Valley Highway north of Trona, California.

I had ridden the Trona railroad in from Mojave and was making coffee just at dawn about straight across from where the Argus Market now stands, a mile or so from Trona. I seen a couple guys had another fire about a hundred yards down the tracks from me but paid them little attention.

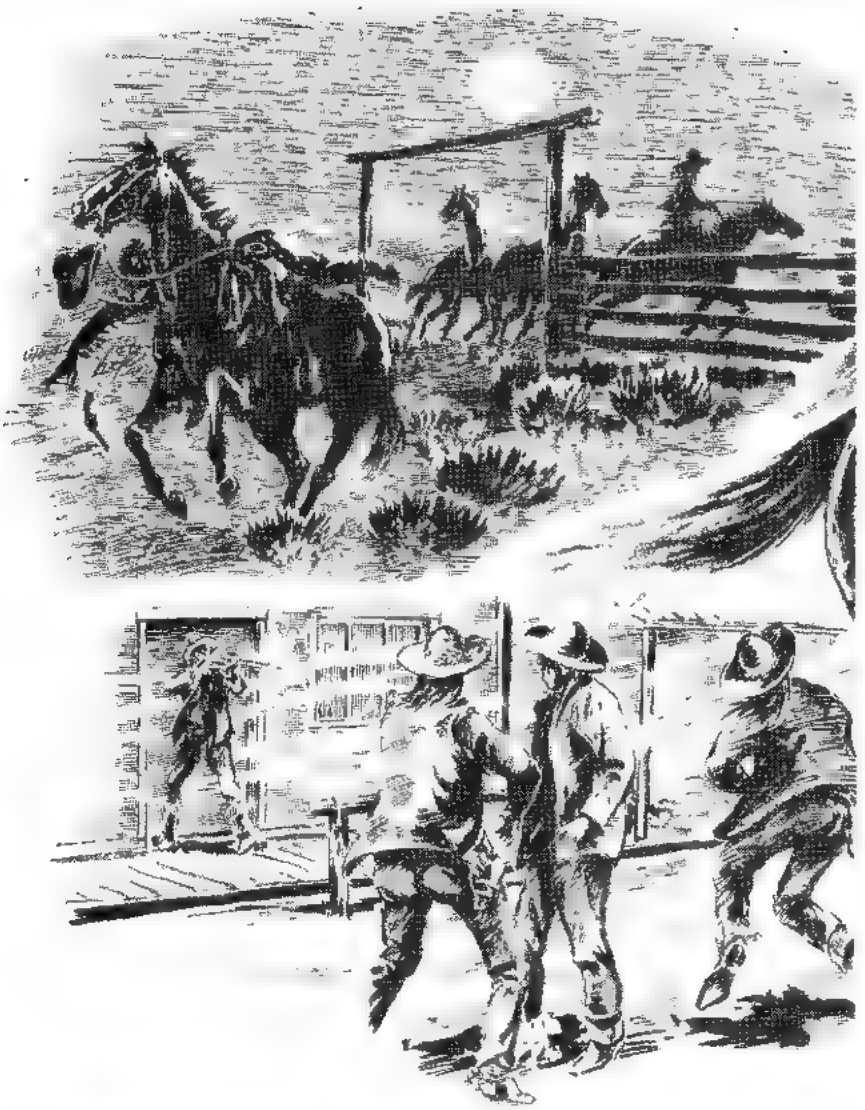
Well, about the time I had drank my coffee and was ready to put on my gear and hike out, a pickup truck stopped and the occupant went over to the two men, then they all walked up to me and the truck driver asked me if I wanted to go to work in a mine.

To make a long story short, I wound up in a small cabin at the Ruth Mine with two tramp miners, Montana Red and one old fellow named Charley Phillips. Both were fresh out of the Sunshine Mine near Osburn, Idaho in the Coeur d'Alenes and before that the Climax Mine not far from Leadville, Colorado. And of course much of their talk was of Butte, Montana and the crossroads of the West, as far as tramp miners were concerned.

I had a pretty good time listening to their tales of mining booms at Rawhide, Pioche and many other places and of course I had the dubious honor in later years of being with Montana Red at

(Continued on page 44)

"I'll Kill 'Til I Die!"



By SHERRYL WARRICK

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

Wesley Barnett had just enough sympathizers to

ON the morning of January 10, 1888, the streets of Tulsa Town, Indian Territory, lay cold and deserted. The sky was coated in hard grey clouds; the wind hurled itself out of the north, whipping tiny shafts of smoke from their chimneys.

Wesley Barnett waited, oblivious of the gusting wind. Weight evenly balanced and belying the fact that he walked with a slight limp, Barnett stood unarmed just inside the doorway of a home near what is now First and Boulder in present Tulsa, Oklahoma. His dark eyes narrowed as he watched four men tromp down the street, hats pulled low. Barnett's gaze hung on one of the four, Mutaloke, a prominent Creek fullblood, and without taking his eyes off Mutaloke, he stepped out the doorway and calmly announced, "I am ready."

The quiet challenge shot through the cold air, halting the four startled men. But one immediately regained his composure and, reaching for his gun, tritely replied, "So am I."

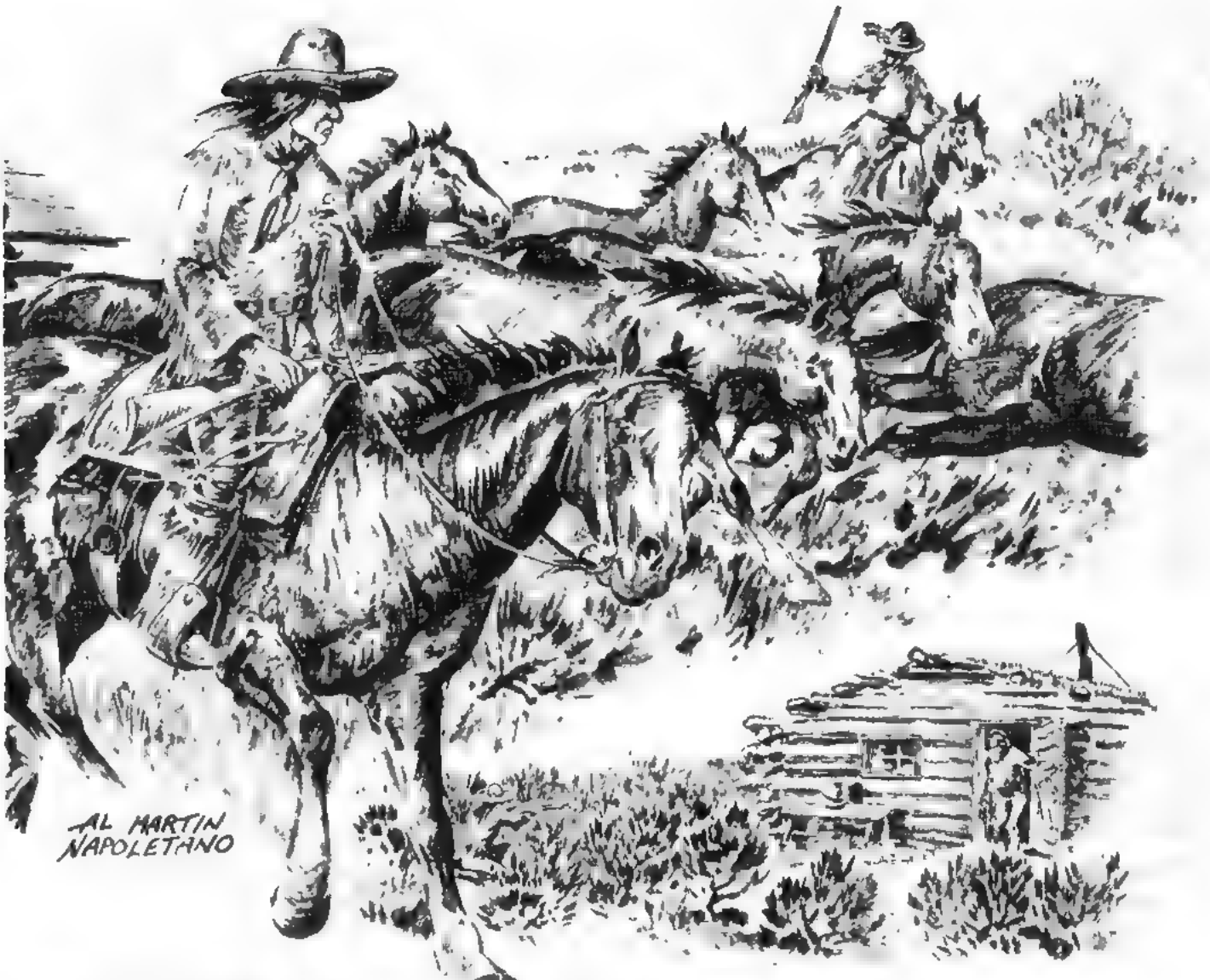
Even as Mutaloke's gloved hand tugged at the butt of his pistol, Barnett calmly backed into the house and reappeared, bringing a Winchester to his jacketed shoulder. Calling for the others to get out of the way, he fired four shots in rapid succession. Each took effect, and in the abrupt stillness, suddenly grown even colder, Mutaloke's lifeless form slumped to the ground.

Wesley Barnett, eyes darting about him, ran toward the rear of the house and flung himself into the saddle, leaving behind the echo of his horse's hoofs and a pool of blood that refused to sink into the frozen earth.

At the time of Mutaloke's death, Wesley Barnett was a twenty-year-old fullblood Creek Indian who, according to a local newspaper *The Indian Chieftain* (Vinita, I.T.), bore the distinction of being the most daring and lawless man in Creek history, a distinction evidenced by the notches and brass tacks on the stock of his rifle. Mutaloke was neither the first nor the last to die because of Wesley Barnett. He was merely the most prominent.

ACCORDING to one account, Barnett first began taking the law into his hands when, with great deliberation, he killed his stepfather. The old man had apparently wronged Barnett's mother and then tried to make up to her. She refused, and her husband grew angry and killed her.

As soon as the news reached Barnett, he quickly rode home to Indian Territory from the Indian boarding school in Lawrence, Kansas. With hard eyes he viewed the casket-size burial house that enclosed his mother and her favorite possessions. Resolutely he turned away. That night, the next day, and the next, he waited in the brush surrounding his stepfather's



keep him riding. And as long as he rode, he killed!

cabin. The old man did not come out. Patiently young Barnett waited. Finally the door opened, its dry hinges carrying a faint creaking on the wind, and Barnett shouldered his rifle. He fired again and again.

This story may or may not accurately recount the beginning of Barnett's misadventures, but it is documented that he played hell up and down the Creek Nation during the year 1888. And in so doing he built up a notorious reputation. He was charged and/or credited with everything from robbing trains to riding a trick horse, and in a short time he became a kind of folk hero to many of the local people, hero enough that a lot of them were willing to offer him food and a night's lodging during his flights from the law.

Actually, Barnett's lawless life revolved about a lucrative horse-stealing operation. He and a band of followers stole enough good horseflesh to attract the attention of the law-abiding Creeks, particularly those originally owning the horses. These men, armed and under the leadership of Mutaloke, vowed they would settle with the horse thieves, especially Barnett.

Deciding among themselves who was guilty of taking part in the raiding, the vigilantes set out to punish each one. Noah Partridge—one of Barnett's men—was the first. The self-appointed posse rode silently through the night until they came to Partridge's small cabin. Quietly they sat their horses in a ring about the house. One man helloed it, his voice ringing in the crisp air of the Creek hill country.

Immediately there was a stirring, a momentary pause, and then Noah Partridge suddenly filled the small doorway, his eyes on the man sitting his horse directly in front of the door. Slowly Partridge stepped toward the waiting circle.

Gunfire flared into the night, spurting out the stench of gunpowder and viciously cutting Partridge down.

NEWS of Partridge's death spread rapidly, and others who suspected that they might get similar justice, including Wesley Barnett, quickly banded together in the hills. Instantly the whole Creek Nation knew of the impending standoff between the outlaws and vigilantes—the outlaws roaming the hills, armed and hiding, with the vigilantes continuously tracking them.

For two months this went on, dividing the Nation in support of the two groups, one faction wanting its folk hero and his men to ride free, the other crying for punishment. Then the new tribal governor, L.C. Perryman, took office, and managed to get both parties to disband.

(Continued on page 52)

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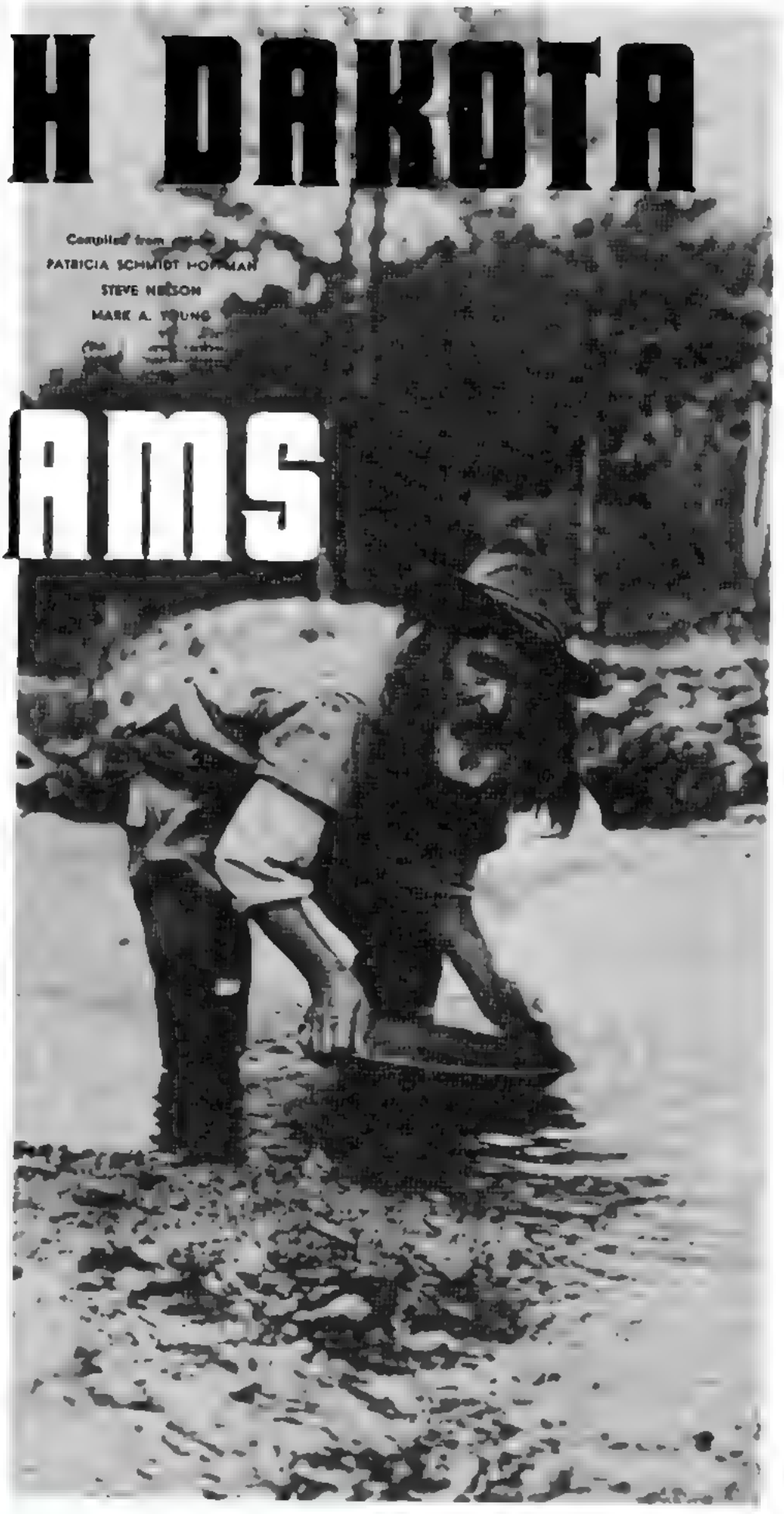
ELECTRONIC RE ROH BITED

SOUTH DAKOTA GOLD STREAMS

Compiled from
PATRICIA SCHMIDT HOFFMAN
STEVE NELSON
MARK A. YOUNG



Prospectors were prowling these waterways 15 years before the rush to California. You can do the same — and today it's considerably safer!

Editor's note: for those readers who like to dream in the winter of where they'll be going next summer and would like more detailed information about places both mentioned and unmentioned in the article below, you may write (or call) Patricia Schmidt Hoffman, Public Information Specialist, Division of Tourism, Joe Foss Building, Pierre, South Dakota 57501. (Toll free number 1-800-843-1930)

IT isn't really known when gold was first discovered in South Dakota. And no one is really sure who the first discoverers were. Historically, credit goes to the 1874 members of Custer's expedition, who discovered the yellow metal in French Creek near the present town of Custer. But earlier than that, Father DeSmet, a missionary who spent thirty years among the Dakota Indians, told of gold dust in the possession of Indians who said they had "got it in the Black Hills." Where and when they "got it," is not clear.

Then there is that famous piece of sandstone discovered near Spearfish in

1887, known today as the Thoen Stone. It had these scratches, "Came to these hills in 1833, seven of us, DeLacompt, Ezra Kind, G. W. Wood, T. Brown, R. Kent, William King, Indian Crow, all died but me, Ezra Kind, killed by Indians beyond high hill. Got our gold dust June, 1834." That year, 1834, was fifteen years before the Sierra Nevada lode was discovered in California.

Two years after the Custer Expedition, during the height of the Black Hills Gold Rush, prospectors found evidence that the gulches near Deadwood had been prospected years before. Decayed timbers were discovered which may have been remains of abandoned placer mines. And early in the gold rush, a rusted 1853 Colt revolver was dredged from a new placer mine. Custer's heralded discovery may have been no "discovery" at all.

The early prospectors found more than gold when they invaded the Black Hills. Custer, in his journal described a portion of the Hills known as Floral Valley, located northwest of Harney Peak. "It's equal I have never seen," he wrote. "In no public or private park have I ever seen such a profuse display of flowers. Every step of our march was amidst flowers of the most exquisite colors and perfume, so luxuriant in growth that men plucked them without dismounting from the saddle. It was a strange sight to glance back at the advancing columns of cavalry and behold the men with beautiful bouquets in their hands, while the head gear of their horses was decorated with wreaths of flowers to fit crown a queen of May."

The first wave of miners, however, didn't see the timber, the wild flowers, and the fertile land. All they saw were creek bottoms in their search for nuggets.

John Gordon knew that the tales saying the Black Hills of Dakota Territory were rich with gold were true. His group left Sioux City for the Hills while the ink was still wet on newspaper reports of the gold discovery.

The risks were two-fold. Indian attacks were possible, and the U. S. Cavalry was expected to enforce the Indians' rights and keep white men out. Gordon reasoned a small party might be able to sneak past the cavalry, and a stockade would protect his party from the Indians.

Gordon and his group were the first gold seekers to enter the Black Hills and the first to build a fort there. But though they were the first names entered in gold rush history, they never got rich. This group of twenty-six men, one woman, Annie Tallent, and her six-year-old son arrived on French Creek about two miles from the present town of Custer, and built the Gordon Stockade. (A replica is at the site today.) They immediately began work to find gold and their efforts were successful. Spring 1875 brought even higher hopes and the party felt it soon would be rich, despite fears of reprisals by the Indians for trespassing into the Paha Sapa (Black Hills). But the real end to their dreams came from the government; the Second Cavalry found them and took them out of the Hills as prisoners.

WITHIN five years after Horatio Ross discovered gold on French Creek in 1874, miners in the Black Hills took nearly eight million dollars worth of gold in their copper pans. (Potato Creek Johnny found a nugget as big as a candy bar near Deadwood.) Then gold panning became rare as deep mines went after the yellow metal.

The gold rush spawned dozens of boom towns whose roots went only as deep as the high-grade ore. Most died as quickly as they were born. Some miners made it big; many more didn't. The skeletons of those places still remain in isolated canyons and gulches.

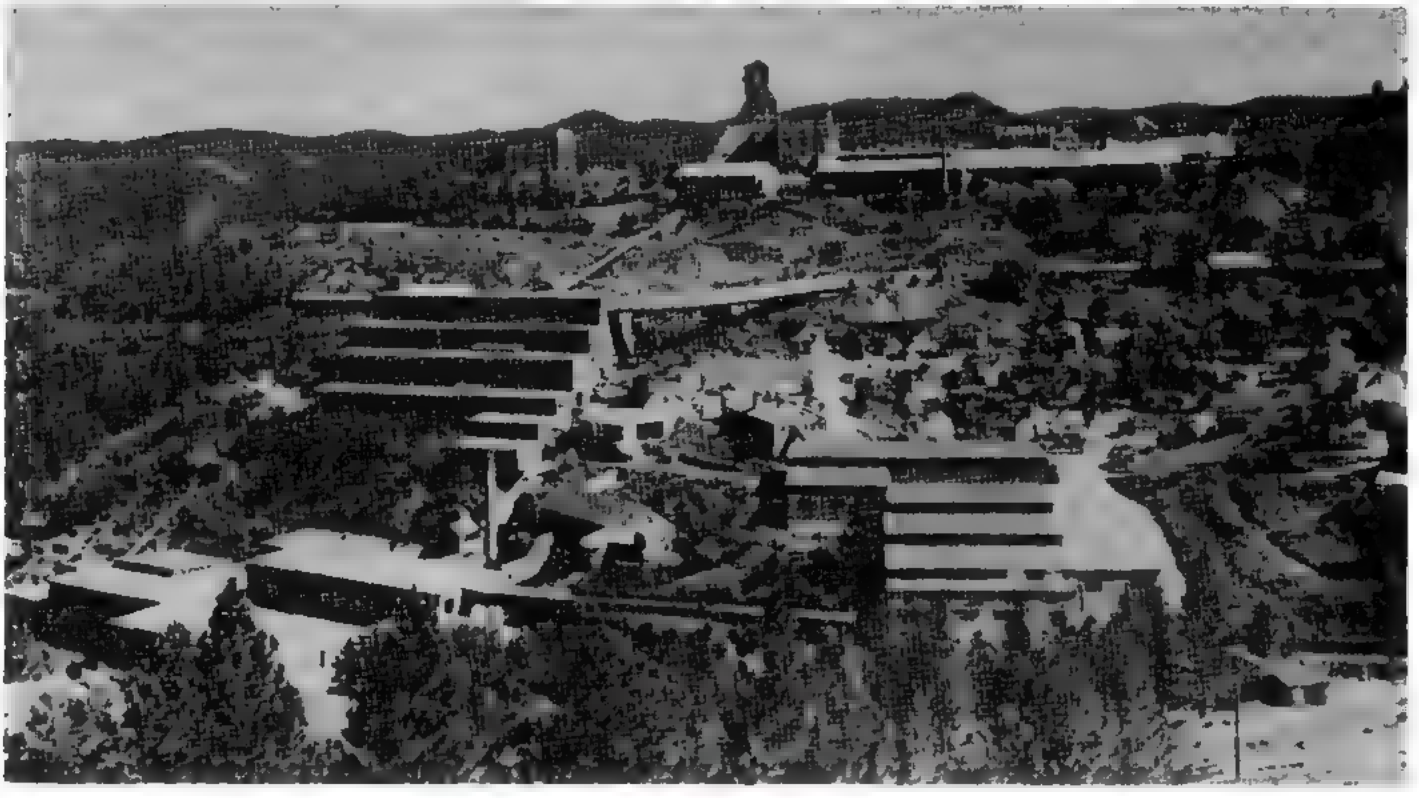
Hill City, along Highway 385, was the second community established in the Hills (1876). Within a few miles of this small, still-lively town, today's travelers can find evidence of numerous siblings which were there for awhile, and are dust today.

Many of those gold camps had names reflecting the dreams of the miners who founded them: Camp Prospect, Golden Slipper, Oreville, Golden Summit, Eureka, are just a few. The towns turned out to be as transient as the dreams.

Anyone looking for ghost towns and ghost mines can find them dotting the gullies around Hill City. For instance in Palmer Gulch, three miles east, old gold camps and mines sit rubbing elbows.

At left, "Potato Creek" Johnny Perrett got his name by finding a five-inch long nugget on Potato Creek in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Johnny used various methods of gold mining, but his acknowledged favorite was his gold pan. A replica of the nugget is on display at the Adams Memorial Museum in Deadwood, South Dakota. Below, Lead, South Dakota, population about 5,000, stretches across valleys and up hills, with the Homestake Gold Mine and the surrounding houses clinging to the sides of pine-covered canyons.

Courtesy Homestake Mining Company



On the west side of Palmer Gulch, just off the graveled county road 353, are the remains of the Golden Summit (also called the Gold Medal or just the Summit) Mine. The Golden Summit was worked intermittently from 1878-1913, but never achieved more than small production. A few abandoned works and rickety buildings still mark the spot, which is three miles east of Hill City and one-fourth mile south on the road to Palmer Gulch Lodge.

Nearby was the town of Addie Camp, founded during Hill City's tin boom days in the 1890s. An English firm attempted to produce tin from the Addie Mine, but never made a profit here though the shafts went 800 feet deep. Today Addie Camp (also known as Kennedyville and Canadaville) consists of a few scattered houses, most of them abandoned, two-and-one-half miles east of Hill City on the north side of the railroad tracks.

There were other camps and mines in the same area: Goldenville, the Golden Slipper Mine (now known as the Empire Mine), and Grizzly Bear. Many more exist north of Hill City, on county road 231 toward Mystic.

About four-and-one-quarter miles along this road are the remains of Tigerville, one house and a sawmill, at the Junction of the road from Hill City to Deerfield. The town was a boomer in 1880, built around the workings of the big King Solomon Mine. It probably got its name from the Bengal Tiger Mine, a few miles away, reputed to be a very rich claim. Judging from what's left at Tigerville, production of the mines here didn't match their reputations or their names.

About seven miles northwest of Hill City the Queen Bee Mine began in 1879, in Skull Gulch. By 1884 a considerable town named after the mine had grown up. The mine operated off and on until 1934, when it closed, and the big McVey forest fire in 1939 destroyed all but one of the buildings. From country road 231 a dirt road turns off at Redfern and goes east, then north, to the Queen Bee.

Farther north on 231, about twelve miles out of Hill City, sits Mystic. The town was originally called Sitting Bull, but changed its name in the 1880s when the railroad came through.

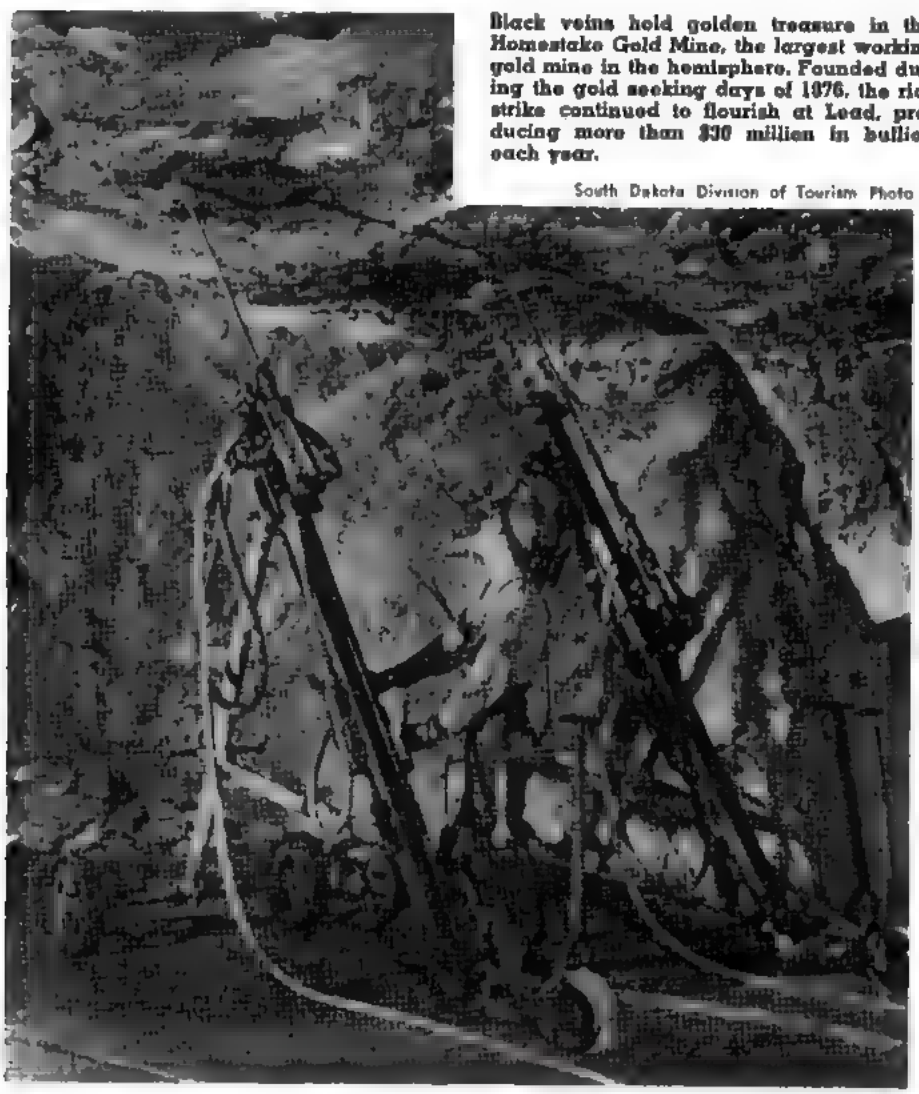
Mystic got into the gold rush late, in 1904, when an advanced gold reclamation plant opened there. It failed. Locals hoped that the Black Hills and Western Railroad would assure the town's prosperity, but that line quit in 1947. Today a few homes are all that remain from the town with high hopes.

About four miles west of Mystic on Castle Creek are the remains of Lookout, founded with the Lookout Mine in 1882. Old mill works still exist in a dilapidated state. East of Mystic, at the confluence of Castle and Rapid Creeks, Camp Prospect once flourished—now it's gone. So is Canyon City, a booming placer mining camp of about 400 people. An abandoned smokestack and some mill ruins mark that spot on the north side of Rapid Creek.

Today's visitor, searching for those ghost towns and diggin's, will find ample sources for background information and guidance. Amateur explorers should be aware that abandoned mines can be dangerous places. Tumbledown above-ground works are no place to climb around. Old airshafts just under the surface can suddenly collapse, and old mine shafts should never be entered, since their timber shoring will probably be rotted out.

One ghost town name sums up the history of all of them: Oblivion, four miles east of Hill City. It's still on the map, but Oblivion, appropriately enough, was never anything more than a railroad siding. Whoever named it, named it right.

More persistent settlements—Lead, Deadwood, Hill City, Rapid City, Custer and others—endured.



Black veins hold golden treasure in the Homestake Gold Mine, the largest working gold mine in the hemisphere. Founded during the gold seeking days of 1876, the rich strike continued to flourish at Lead, producing more than $30 million in bullion each year.

South Dakota Division of Tourism Photo

HOMESTAKE GOLD. George Hearst used it to found his empire. He had a favorite toast: "Here's to low-grade ore and plenty of it." That was Homestake.

This largest producing North American gold mine is situated high in the northern Black Hills, where the last great gold rush in the United States took place. Homestake began producing in the spring of 1876. Nearly two million pounds of gold have been recovered from this lode, the end product of mining, milling, and refining almost 116 million tons of ore.

Two brother, Fred and Moses Manuel, discovered the Homestake lead on April 9. After mining the claim for a year, they sold to a combine including George Hearst in June 1877. The sale price was $70,000. Hearst's profits would buy Anaconda and Mexican silver mines, and eventually help establish the William Randolph Hearst publishing empire.

The first gold taken from Homestake was mined in open cuts. That practice was soon switched to recovery of ore through shafts. Today all mining is done underground.

Gold produced from Homestake ore is recovered through mining operations that bring over 1.5 million tons of ore to the surface each year. On the surface the ore is crushed, ground and chemically treated. In the final refining process the free gold is removed and poured into small ingots weighing 27-plus pounds (400 troy ounces) each, with 99.99 percent purity. This gold is sold to numerous manufacturers of gold jewelry, industrial, electronic, and space-age equipment, and to two Black Hills gold jewelry fabricators.

Homestake's deepest shafts now reach 8,000 feet below the surface—they're

(Continued on page 32)

"STRUCK OIL"

– A THEATRICAL GUSHER OF THE '70s!

J. W. Williamson and Maggie Moore in "Struck Oil."

A play by a down-on-his-luck miner launched one of the world's largest theatrical companies!

By COLIN H. WILSON

Photos Courtesy Hoblitzelle Theatre Arts Collection, Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Maggie Moore

IT MAY seem a little odd, but a man who starred in a play in California over one hundred years ago still has his name in lights. In Australia!

James Cassius Williamson, a handsome young actor in San Francisco in 1873, met a bankrupt miner who offered to sell him a play for $100. With this play Williamson toured the world and made a fortune. He then moved to Australia where he proceeded to carve out for himself an enormous theatrical empire which in its heydey was the biggest in the world. At one time Williamson had fourteen road shows playing simultaneously in the capital cities of Australia, in the small back country towns, and across the thousand-mile-wide stormy Tasman Sea in New Zealand.

Williamson was born in Mercer, Pennsylvania in 1845, but while he was still a child his family moved west to Milwaukee, and it was there that he went on the stage at age eighteen. His first engagement was as a bit part player at the Academy of Music there. When the company folded, Williamson went with one of the leading players to Canada before making his way to New York where he remained for nine years.

Tiring of Broadway he joined John McCullough at the California Theater in San Francisco. This was much to the astonishment of New York newspaper critics. "California," one remarked, "is a good place to come from, not to go to."

One of Williamson's first parts in San Francisco required him to dance a jig. As he couldn't dance very well, vivacious young Maggie Moore, who had been on the stage in San Francisco since childhood, invited him home to take lessons from her brother who was an expert dancer. Her mother had just gone off to Virginia City to visit a sick sister and Maggie had been left to be cook, housemaid, washer-up to the children, and head of the household.

Miss Moore in costume for the production "Struck Oil."

Williamson came for his dancing lessons and soon began to cast an eye in Maggie's direction. For his pains she set him to shelling the peas or peeling the potatoes. Maggie afterwards recalled: "We didn't know in those days he was going to be the big man in Australian theaters. He just did what I told him and then went and took his lessons in the cellar.

"We ate in the kitchen, for the parlor upstairs was only opened for swell company, and he wasn't swell enough. Pete Baker of Baker and Farren, a well-known team of that day, used to come about the place. He was after me, but when he asked me to marry him I just said, 'Och, go along out o' that,' and showed him where the peas and potatoes were waiting. Both boys looked a bit silly when their lovemaking ended in a mess of potatoes."

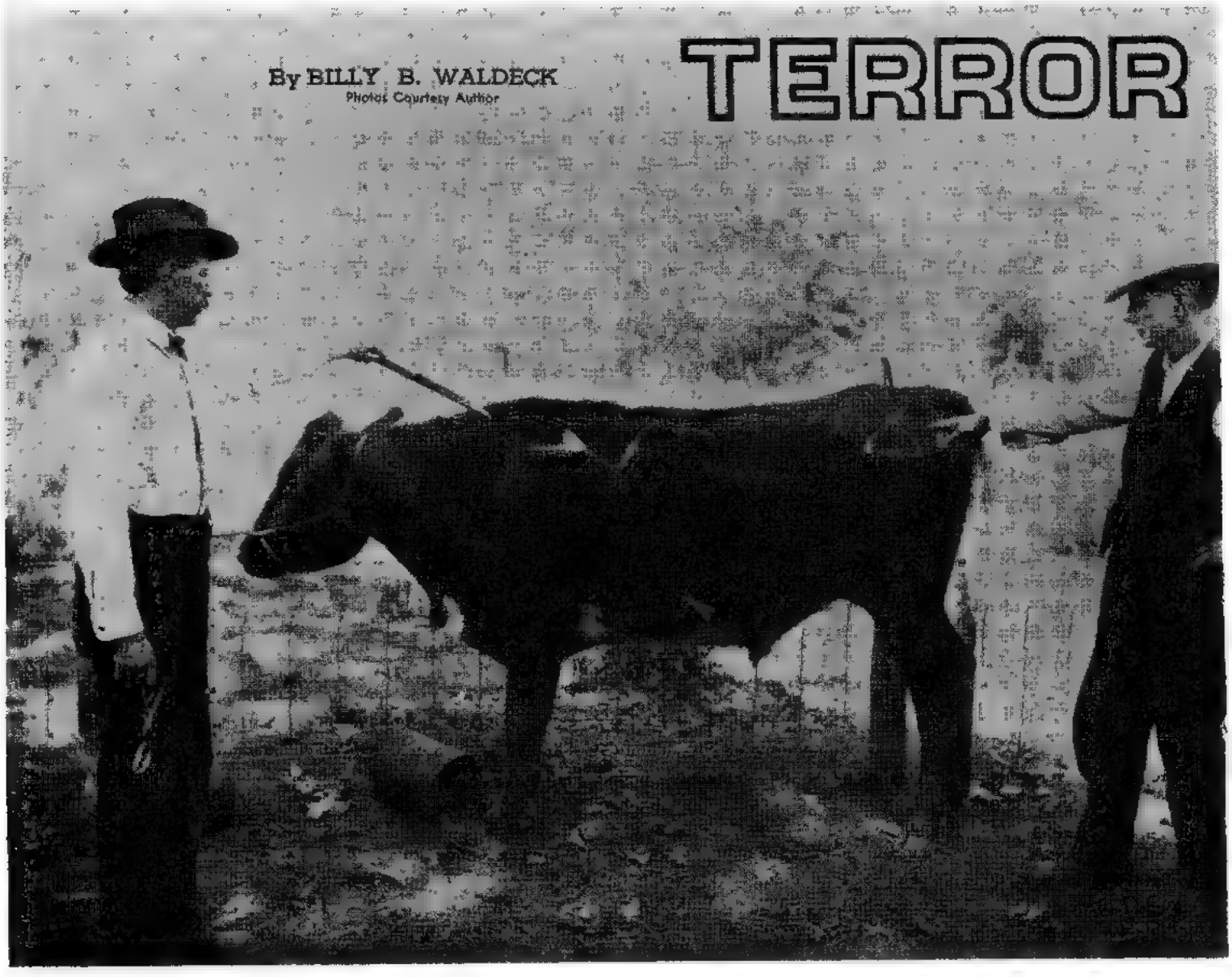
Eventually Maggie relented and she and Jimmy Williamson were married at the old St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco in 1873. In September of that

(Continued on page 47)

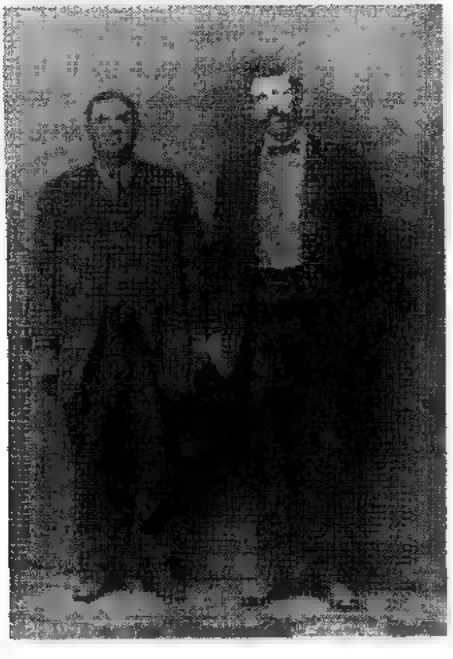
TERROR

By BILLY B. WALDECK

Photos Courtesy Author



Above. Chief Field Inspector John R. Banister and his assistant, Will Mayes. They are inspecting a stolen steer that resulted in the arrest of one J. M. Taylor near Stuart, Oklahoma in November 1914. At left, W. T. Mosier of Pawhuska, Oklahoma on left, and John R. Banister, representing the Cattle Raisers' Association, on the right.



IN Western novels, Hollywood movies, and television dramas, the old-time cattle rustler is portrayed as working in gangs, stealing many head of cattle in one grand sweep. In reality, this was not the case. Usually, one or two men gathered a few cows at a time from some rancher's pasture, adding them to a herd they hid in a box canyon or on a ranch of their own. If desiring to hold the cows for any length of time they altered the rightful owner's brand with the use of a running iron, a long metal rod with a hook bent on one end, heated to a cherry red. A skillful cow thief could change almost any known brand, even though he might not be able to write his own name.

If looking for an early sale, the cow was butchered at once. The hide and head were buried, with a campfire built over the spot to eradicate evidence of the crime. The cut-up carcass was then sold to some local shop or peddled from house to house in town, this being in the days of no refrigeration.

Early-day sheriffs and cattle inspectors were constantly involved in these cases. Frequently they had to cover many states to get their man, secure enough evidence to convict him, and then see him tried and sentenced by the proper authorities.

To pay tribute to all those men who enforced the law in the West, it is well to examine a typical cattle theft case, and the routine work of an honorable Texan.

John R. Banister of Santa Anna, Texas, one of these lawmen, spent forty-two years of his life bringing criminals to justice—first as a young

TO THE RUSTLERS

There never was a better cattle inspector--Banister could make a little old pasture or holding pen seem like Scotland Yard!

man with the Texas Rangers, followed by years as a Field Inspector for the Cattle Raiser's Association of Texas, and then serving as Sheriff of Coleman County.

Modest and unassuming, when asked about his exploits, his words were, "I was there."

And Banister's exploits ranged from numerous mundane cattle theft investigations to the high adventure of being with the Texas Rangers at the capture and killing of Sam Bass, Robinhood train robber. He helped escort the notorious gunman, John Wesley Hardin, to the prison at Huntsville, and rode with the posse that killed Lina Baisa, dread Mexican bandit of the Border country.

TO further examine the premise that most cattle rustling in the early days was the work of one or two men, let us examine the case of: The State

John R. Banister in his office at Comanche, Texas in 1917, while he was Sheriff of Coleman County. Note the extensive antler collection.

of Oklahoma versus John Rippie.

The Texas Cattle Raisers' Association counted as members many ranchers from neighboring states. The Association worked wherever they were needed.

Therefore, following instructions of E. B. Spiller, Secretary of Cattle Raisers' Association of Texas, dated September 13, 1914, Chief Field Inspector John R. Banister went from Fort Worth, Texas to Pawhuska, Oklahoma, arriving there on the 14th.

Banister at once put in calls for Albert Appel of Blackland, Oklahoma, and Will Mayes, one of the inspectors supposed to be in the vicinity of Hickory, Oklahoma.

Albert Appel, a prominent member of the Association, met Banister in Pawhuska on September 16. The following day the two inspectors went to a ranch near Blackland. There they began investigation of reported cattle theft cases.

On the morning of September 18, Banister went by horseback in company with Gus Jones to John Rippie's ranch near Foraker. The two inspectors found Rippie at home, and presented their credentials.

Banister said, "Mr. Rippie, I hear that you traded for an Anchor steer. I would like to see that steer."

"Yes, a man came along and wanted to trade a steer. I gave the man a heifer for the four-year-old steer."

"Who is the man? Where does he live? Who was present when the trade was made?"

John Rippie shuffled his feet, looked down, and said, "No one was present. I do not know the man's name, but he lives about six miles south from Foraker."

Banister regarded him with deep blue eyes. "You go with me now to look at that steer."

"I can't go today, but I'll meet you about two miles east of Foraker tomorrow morning. I'll be there at eight o'clock. The steer is in the pasture with my cattle."

Banister and Gus Jones mounted their horses and rode away from the Rippie ranch, leaving John Rippie watching their departure apprehensively.

Banister had no intenton of waiting until the next morning to inspect Rippie's cattle. With Gus Jones he returned to Rippie's pasture. According to previous plans, the two inspectors met Jim Borroum, Albert Appel, and Charles Bridges. They began immediately to survey Rippie's herd, finding about twenty cattle grazing in the pasture. It was obvious to them that marks and brands had been altered.

Banister carefully noted each animal, fearing that Rippie would remove them that night.

AT eight o'clock on the morning of September 19, Banister and Gus Jones again rode to Rippie's pasture. A half an hour later they were met there by John Rippie accompanied by H. G. Ezell.

Rippie, Ezell, Jones, and Banister rounded up the cattle. At a glance Banister saw that the suspected animals had not been molested.

Rippie and Banister rode into the herd. Banister cautiously asked, "Rippie, do all of these cattle belong to you?"

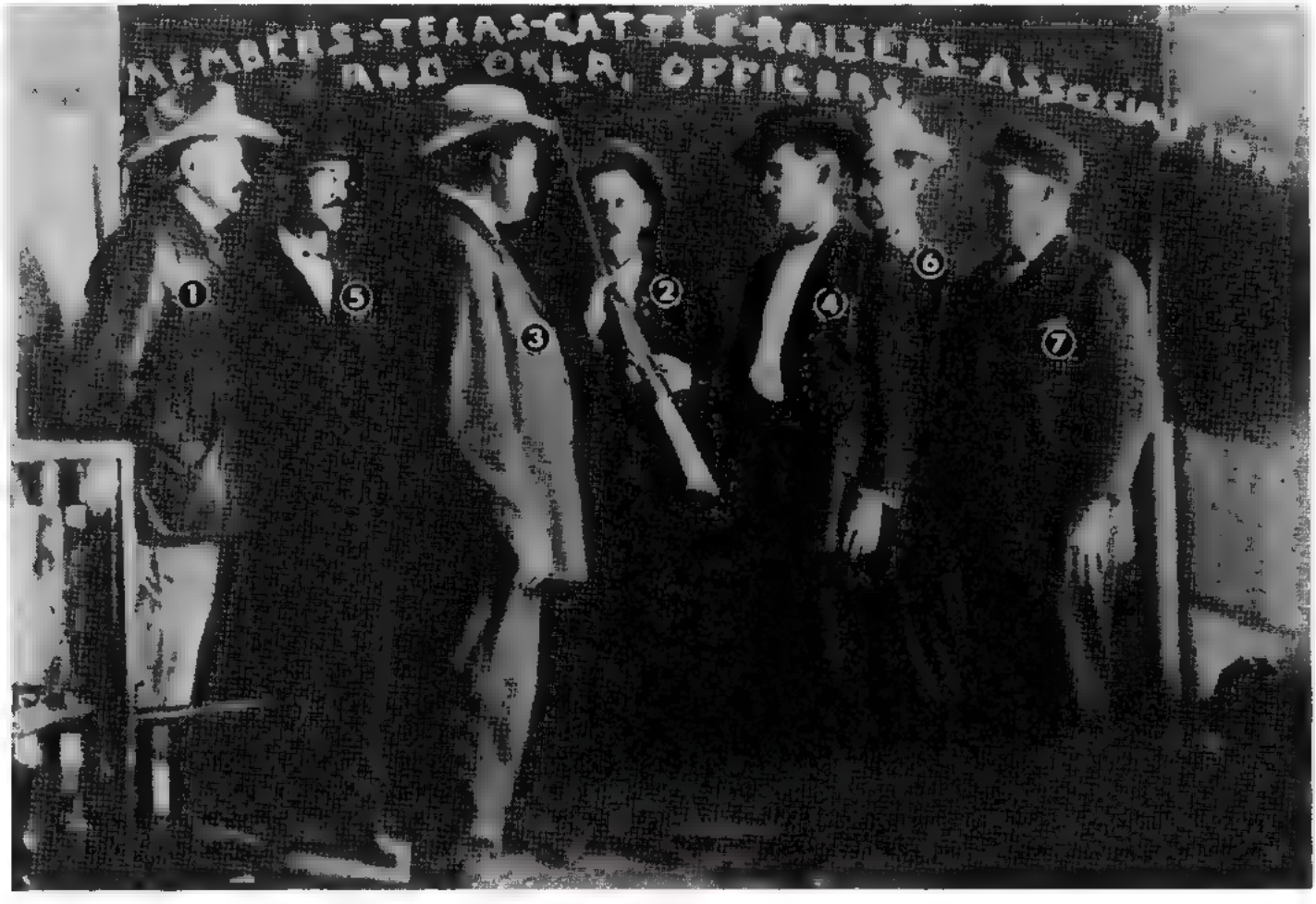
Rippie hesitated, remained silent a moment, then said, "I own everything except the one steer which has my mark, the one with the large fresh scar on the left shoulder."

Banister said, "Rippie, some of your cattle are so badly branded no man could tell anything about them unless they were put in a pen where they could be roped and tied to a post."

Banister's keen blue eyes narrowed. "I suggest we take these cattle to Albert's ranch."

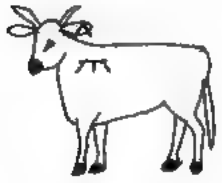
The weather began to change abruptly and by the time the men had driven

Elmer Wheeler of Pawhuska, Oklahoma presenting John Banister with a rifle, in recognition of meritorious service in the rounding up of cattle rustlers in Oklahoma. (1) H. M. Freas, Sheriff of Osage County; (2) Dave Ware, Deputy; (3) Elmer Wheeler; (4) John R. Banister; (5) Daniel Maher, Association member; (6) A. S. Sands, Association member; (7) J. C. Stribling, Association member.



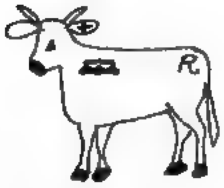
The following illustrations and explanations were submitted to the County Attorney at Pawhuska, Oklahoma as evidence in the John Rippie case by John R. Banister, Chief Field Inspector for the Texas Cattle Raisers' Association.

No. 1.



No. 1 Foraker, Oklahoma, September 11, 1914. This cut shows mark and brand, baldfaced two-year-old heifer, belonging to Albert Appel, which was lost about November, 1913, when a two-year-old.

No. 2

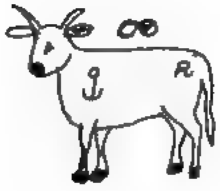


No. 2 (dehorned) This cut shows same animal as No. 1, after brand being defaced and also the mark having been altered. This animal was cut from John Rippie's herd near Foraker, Oklahoma, September 19, 1914, and was positively identified by Albert Appel as the one lost last November. This cow had calf following her when recovered. Complaint and arrest of John Rippie was based on the theft of this cow. Above animals, cow and calf, were turned over to Albert Appel in person at his ranch September 19, 1914.

No. 3

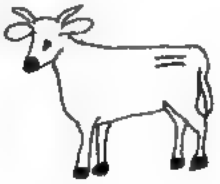
No. 3 This cut shows straight mark and brand of the Big Canyon Ranch Company.

No. 4



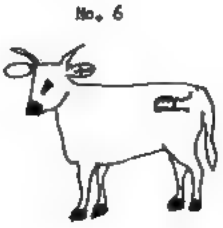
No. 4 This cut shows condition of mark and brand of one four-year old steer taken from John Rippie near Foraker, Oklahoma, September 19, 1914, and was fully identified as the property of the Big Canyon Ranch Company, and was turned over to Albert Appel, who represented the above company.

No. 5



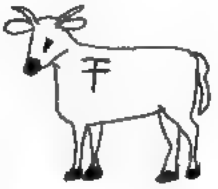
No. 5 Foraker, Oklahoma, September 19, 1914. One red steer, line back, two-year-old past, property of J. L. Borroum of Cedar Vale, Kansas, lost near Foraker, April 1914.

No. 6



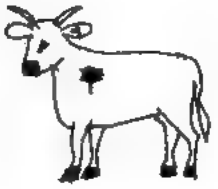
No. 6 (dehorned) This cut shows Lazy R put on over Borroum Lazy Two Bars, and changed to the mark of John Rippie. This animal was positively identified by J. L. Borroum and was turned over to him in person, September 19, 1914.

No. 7



No. 7 This cut shows brand of W. T. Leahy of Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

No. 8



No. 8 (dehorned) This cut shows Leahy steer after original brand being burnt out and mark changed to that of John Rippie. This animal was also identified as the property of W. T. Leahy, was put in Albert Appel's pasture, September, 1914, and W. T. Leahy notified in person.

Signed: John R. Banister
Chief Field Inspector
for the Cattle Raisers'
Association of Texas.

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the herd the mile to Albert's ranch, a cold drizzle had set in.

The cattle inspectors roped ten animals. They sheared and washed the brands on the cows' flanks, but the day had turned cloudy and showery, and later when the photos were developed, the pictures proved to be a failure.

By this time, Banister, Gus Jones, along with Rippie and Ezell, were joined by J. L. Borroum, Albert Appel, Will Mayes, and Tom Salmon. All of these men examined the suspected cattle.

Rippie was present. He told Banister, "I branded the Anchor steer and also the Appel cow which I got from Mr. Ezell."

Banister regarded Ezell with a piercing look, and asked, "What do you have to say about it?"

Ezell replied, "I never sold that cow to Rippie."

Rippie broke into the questioning. "I bought some cows from Ezell and lost some of them. I found this one and branded it, believing it to be the one I bought from Mr. Ezell."

Banister turned to Ezell and asked, "When did you sell the last cow to Rippie?"

"It was in 1911 when I turned over the last four cows. They were branded NR. They were grown cows at that time." Ezell paused and added, "This cow we are examining is only three years old. It would have been a suckling calf at the time I turned over the last cows to Rippie."

Banister finished his examination of the Rippie cattle. He carefully noted the description of some of them. He said, "Rippie, I claim the Lazy E cow and calf for Albert Appel, the Anchor steer for R. R. Russel, and the steer branded with two Lazy Bars for J. L. Borroum of Cedar Vale, Kansas."

Banister hooked his thumbs in his leather belt and continued. "The blotched brand steer belongs to Will Lehy of Pawhuska, and I claim the Lazy H steer for R.R. Russell. Rippie, what do you have to say about it?"

"Well, you can have all of them but the Lazy H steer. I bought him from Mr. Hufstutter. You can see him about it."

"All right, I'll do that." Then Banister proceeded to turn all the animals over to their rightful owners, or to their representatives.

Later, Banister went to see Hufstutter about the Lazy H steer. Hufstutter told Banister, "I sold the Lazy H steer to John Rippie."

On Monday, September 21, Banister, accompanied by Will Mayes and Albert Appel, went to Pawhuska. They placed the evidence they had collected before the County Attorney. A formal complaint was accepted, and a warrant was

(Continued on page 48)

A VERY SPECIAL STRONGBOX

By PAT HEITMANN
Photos Courtesy Author

People started coveting this little safe in 1888 and they haven't let up since!

STRONGBOXES of the Old West represented dreams of easy riches; and the greed inborn in all of us drove some men to incredible lengths to get to the gold those iron boxes carried.

Often they were bolted to either the front or rear boots of the stagecoaches. If robbers could break into them by shooting their locks off, they would, but sometimes dynamiting the stagecoach, strongbox and all, was the only way.

First used in 1877 for valuable shipments, strongboxes were designed with bolt and key locks and built of iron to discourage the rash of robberies taking place on Wells Fargo's stagelines. The familiar green wooden strongbox was a too easy target.

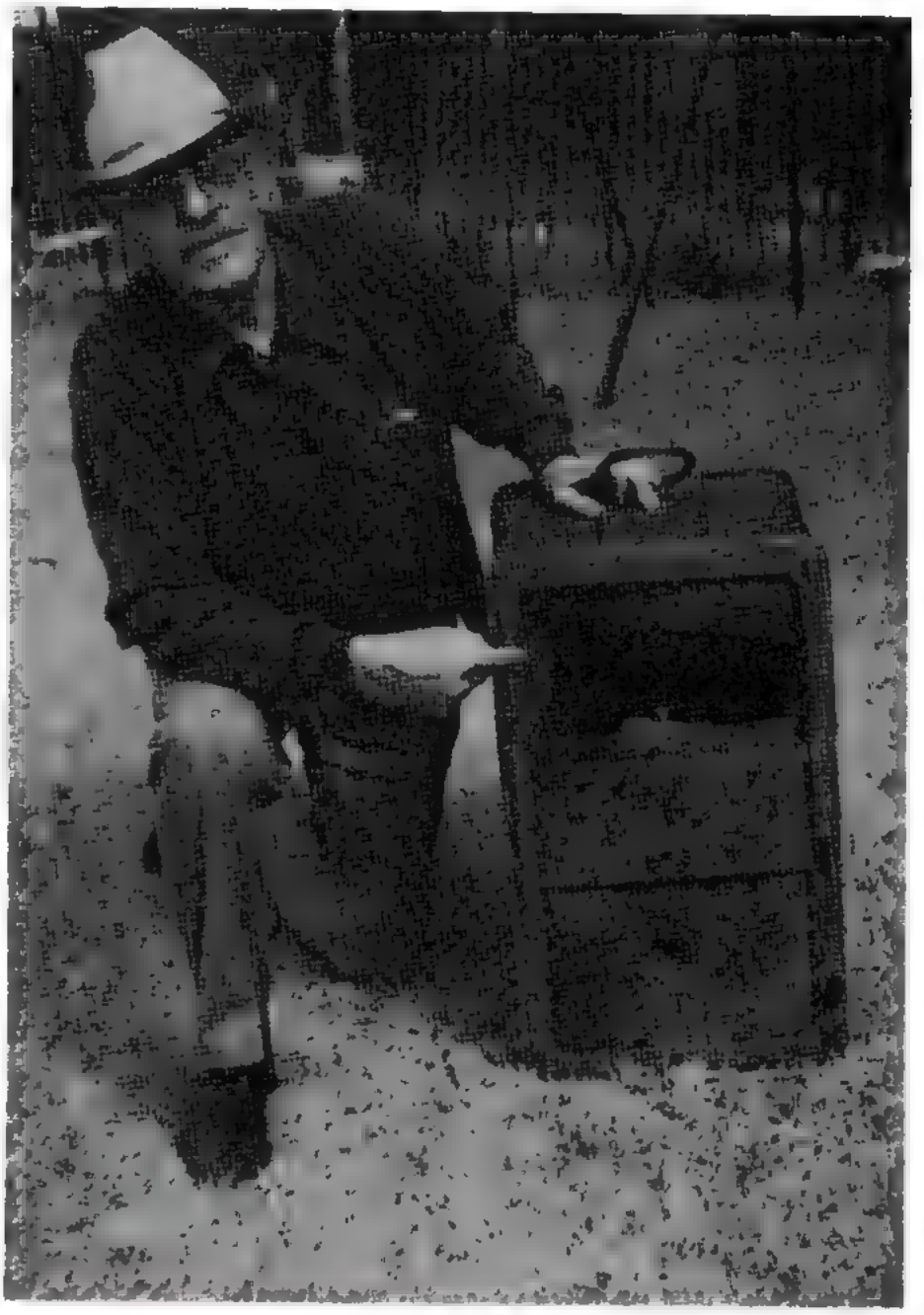
In a directive to his agents, dated March 1, 1877, Wells Fargo General Superintendent Jno. J. Valentine said the iron strongboxes were of "decided benefit as a protection against highwaymen, one man rarely, if ever, succeeding in robbing them, and two men very seldom." Valentine, however, didn't take into account the determination of Western highwaymen.

Often the coach drivers didn't even know they'd been robbed. If the strongbox happened to be tied on the back boot of the coach, with no shotgun guard, outlaws could ride up behind, jump the stage and pull the box loose. With the coach swaying and rumbling off down the road, the robbers had plenty of time to open the box however they chose, with no interference or danger to themselves. The driver usually didn't know it was gone until he reached his next station. Not knowing when he was robbed, where would he begin looking for the box? Going back over the route was time-consuming as stations were twenty to fifty miles apart. Any trail left would be cold by the time it was discovered. The robbers usually buried the empty strongboxes so no evidence would be visible to a casual passerby who just might run into a posse. It could be years before anyone found the box buried deep in the prairie.

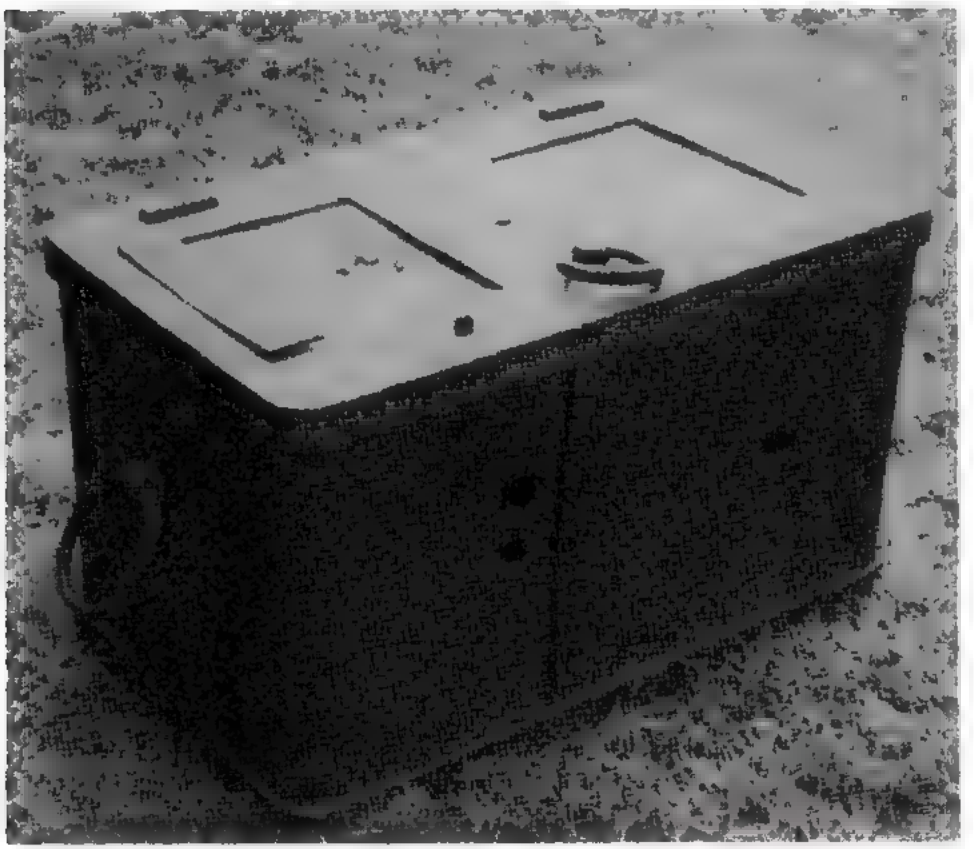
But suppose the outlaws had to bury the treasure and plan on coming back the next day to dig up their loot. They might be murdered by a rival gang or captured by the sheriff before they could get back. Maybe there could be a strongbox buried out there in the West full of gold and forgotten. That was the very image a young cowboy had when he stood staring at the top of an old rusty strongbox buried in the Montana prairie.

IT WAS an unforgettable thrill for John Thom, who had just turned eighteen the spring of 1922. A strongbox packed with gold and jewels would have meant everything to Thom and his family.

Below, John Thom points to the spot where outlaws broke into the strongbox.



Above, The thieves finally pulled the gold out of the bottom of the strongbox. Below, a side view, showing the brass rings and many bullet holes.



That day Thom, his father and a brother were looking for firewood to get the branding irons hot. They were branding some cattle at the old Horse Camp Ranch north of Lavina, Montana.

"While gathering wood, I passed the caved-in roof of an old root cellar," Thom said. "In one corner of the cellar I noticed a piece of iron. After kicking the dirt off, I found a three-inch ring in the center of an iron box."

As he was feverishly digging up the box, he called to the others. They came running from the campfire. After dusting it off, they found it had been shot open on the bottom by a ring of bullets, then a portion of the metal forced in. The lock had then been opened from inside. The box was empty except for a broken jar and some rotten wood. What had happened to the gold?

It was a strange looking box—not like the treasure chests ordinarily associated with a stagecoach. They usually had rounded tops bound with leather straps and had leather carrying-handles on each end. This chest was solid iron, twenty-seven inches long, sixteen inches wide and sixteen inches high. Empty it weighed 150 pounds. Imagine how much it would weigh with a load of gold. There were iron rings four inches across on each end. The top had had a boltlock before the robbers had pounded it in.

"As it was too heavy to take with us, we just left it there and came back for it the next day in a wagon. But it was gone," Thom said. "My dad was fit to be tied." They looked around and found car tracks nearby. Since there weren't many cars in those days, they figured that one wouldn't be too hard to find.

The strongbox was located finally in Lavina. It was on display in front of Farr's, the town druggist's store. The druggist told them that a friend of his came across it on his way to town and told him about it. Thinking it was maybe worth something, he took his car out to the Horse Camp and brought it back. After much haggling, Thom convinced everyone the box was his and took it home.

A few months later, yielding to the townspeople's curiosity, he let it be displayed at Farr's again and also at Zumwalt's Trading Post. Then it was stolen again. Thom notified the sheriff and also advertised in the local newspaper. After several months, just as he'd about given up hope, two young boys discovered the box in the Lavina junkyard. Thom never found out who the culprits were. "After that, I took it out to the ranch," he said, "which was about four miles east of Lavina, and locked it to the dinnerbell post with a heavy chain."

THOSE two experiences were to shape his feelings of possessiveness about the strongbox. In 1964 the State of Montana was sending a train of special historical treasures (somewhat like the Freedom Train of 1976) to the World's Fair in New York City. It was suggested that the strongbox be included but

(Continued on page 50)

THE FIRST FRIEND I made after I arrived in Colorado Springs in 1914 at age seventeen, was a tried and true one to me for sixty years. He was the late Roy A. Davis.

He was a businessman. I bought my first typewriter from him. He later went into politics, first as state representative, and later as senator. He served in both houses for a number of years.

Roy once told me that Governor Ralph L. Carr called him one evening and asked him to walk with him on the Denver streets until daylight came. Roy went. He said that Carr was in the dumps because a man was doomed to die in the gas chamber at the Colorado State Prison, come daylight. Roy said Carr was in a very upset mood.

He told Roy that he couldn't pardon the prisoner because he was a vicious criminal and he didn't want to turn him loose on society. "And so," Roy said, "we walked and walked until we were both ready to drop in our tracks. Cement sidewalks can soon make your legs and joints stiffen up until each step causes some degree of pain."

At daylight, the ordeal was over at the prison and they went into an all-night cafe and drank coffee. But Carr was still suffering over the mandate (his own), because he couldn't pardon the criminal, nor could he contemplate his death in the gas chamber.

Carr was one of Colorado's best governors. He was very well educated and had a keen mind.

In the Cripple Creek Museum the Carr Room is on the top floor. Among the memorabilia is a white Stetson (10-gallon size) which he always wore while campaigning.

During one of his terms of office it was discovered that in the mountains near Breckenridge, Colorado a small piece of land high in the mountains had never become a part of the state through some oversight by government surveyors.

It was a sort of triangular piece of land comprising quite a few acres. When this came to light, the newspapers made a big to-do about it. (If I had known of this acreage, I would have claimed it for myself!)

The state government quickly warned would-be claimants to keep hands off. Then Governor Carr and a long list of dignitaries drove to the foot of the mountain, climbed to the high piece of land and, with proper ceremony, claimed it for the State of Colorado and the United States.

RALPH CARR was born November 11, 1877 in Rosita, Colorado during the silver mining days and moved with his family to Cripple Creek in 1893. After he graduated from the University of Colorado law school, he returned there to publish the Cripple Creek *Times*.

In 1913 he went to Trinidad, Colorado to practice law. As U. S. District Attorney he moved to Denver in 1927 and remained there throughout his life. Ralph Carr was elected Governor in 1938. He died September 25, 1950.

On January 4, 1962 the Cripple Creek *Gold Rush* began a series of short stories written by Carr, memories of his young years in the gold camp area. The late governor spent much time preparing his reminiscences; it became his avocation. He had expected to publish them, but always wanted to edit them a bit more—so, when he died, they had never been submitted to a publisher. Some of them had been used as Christmas greetings to his friends over the years and these too were released by the Ralph Carr Estate. Carr's two vignettes which follow open a long-closed door to his experiences in the gold camp days.

A Cracked Head— And A Broken Heart

I LIKED Bob Ford. He was my idea of a regular man. Although he teased me about my short pants, which he called "picnic pants" and which hardly reached my seven-year-old knees, he drove the finest team of iron-grey horses in the country which was noted for its high-class work stock.

No personal affront could unseat such a hero. In these days of 90-miles-an-hour motor cars, the younger folk cannot know what flesh and blood horses meant in the middle '90s to every Western boy.

Bob was the driver of the Wells Fargo Express Company's express wagon, which brought that company's cargo over the steep grades of the Four-Mile Hill road into Cripple Creek every afternoon from the ever changing end of the railroad line at Midland, a distance of about sixteen or eighteen miles.

The arrival of the Wells Fargo wagon was one of the great events in the daily life of the gold city. The local newspapers carried no wire service at the time; the first source of news from the outside came in the two newspapers printed that morning in Denver—the old Denver *Republican* and the *Rocky Mountain News*. Cash for meeting the payrolls of the mines in the District came from the banks of Colorado Springs. Perishable fruits, vegetables, meats and even oysters were accorded a place in that big wagon.

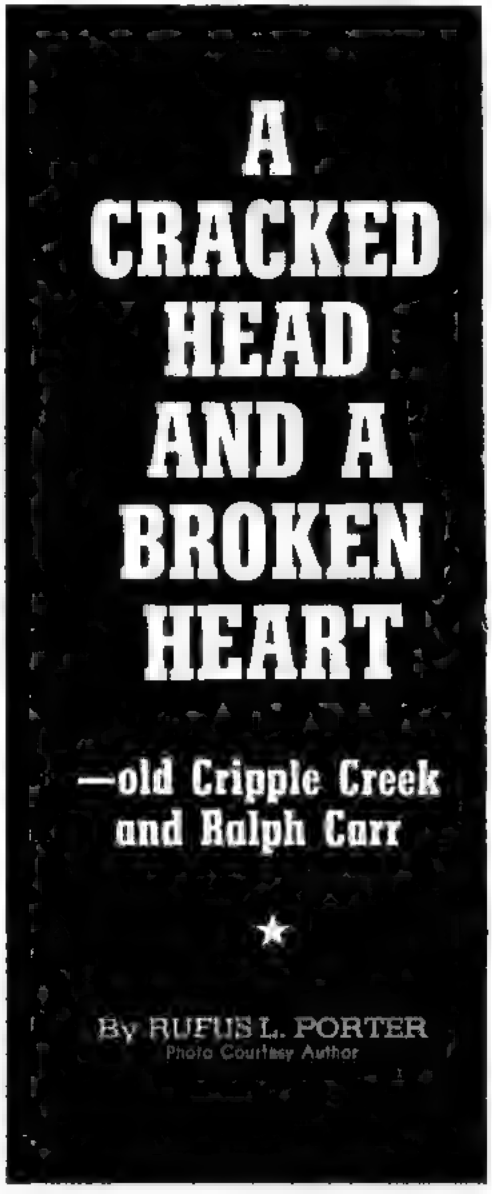
The mail, be it said, came in by stagecoach piloted by Bob Ford's rivals for youthful acclaim—Keno and his kind, with their six-horse lashes and silken "poppers."

Those who sold newspapers on the busy streets awaited the staggered arrivals of Wells Fargo wagons with pleasurable anticipation. So we came to know Bob Ford—a laughing, happy-go-lucky chap who had a way with horses and—rumor said—with women also.

One afternoon the express wagon was late. It was hours late. It was after nightfall before the beautiful iron-grey team came walking slowly down Bennett Avenue. Slumped forward in the driver's seat, hardly able to hold his place with the jolting of the rocky roads of those days, was our old friend Bob Ford. There was a gaping wound in his head.

His story was brief but graphic. Three horsemen had ridden up beside the wagon a few miles out of town above Grassy and had stuck him up. In the melee the attackers had hit him over the head with a revolver. They then took the iron cash box to the roadside, broke it open and removed eight or ten thousand dollars in cash therefrom.

Bob explained that as soon as he was able to do so, he climbed back on the wagon and painfully drove into town. He gave a good description of all three robbers before he went to the hospital, obviously badly injured.



For days posses rode out over the hills on the finest horses the livery stables boasted. At their head was the sheriff from Colorado Springs and the soldierly Jim Marshall, the chief of police from Cripple Creek. They scoured the hills and searched the towns for men answering Bob Ford's description, but nothing came of it.

After a few days, the excitement of a mere highway robbery lost its savor. Life was too full of other interests. There were daily gold strikes, new hopes and new fears. Each day was a new book. Yesterday's thrills were drab memories.

A FEW MONTHS LATER Bob Ford revived interest in the robbery. His patience had been cracked as badly as his head had been. A supplement to his original story involved three prominent citizens of the gold district. An agreement had been entered into, he asserted, whereby the three were to receive the cash box from him without a struggle; he was to be struck slightly on the head to prove that he had put up a fight against the trio, and thereby establish his courage and loyalty to the company; and, most important, a fourth of the boodle was to have been delivered to him when he was discharged from the hospital.

But his heart was sorer than his head when his share had not been forthcoming. In fact, when charged with their delinquency, his co-conspirators had laughingly denied all knowledge of any agreement. More, they were indignant when accused of having massaged his eyebrow with a six-shooter and with looting any iron box.

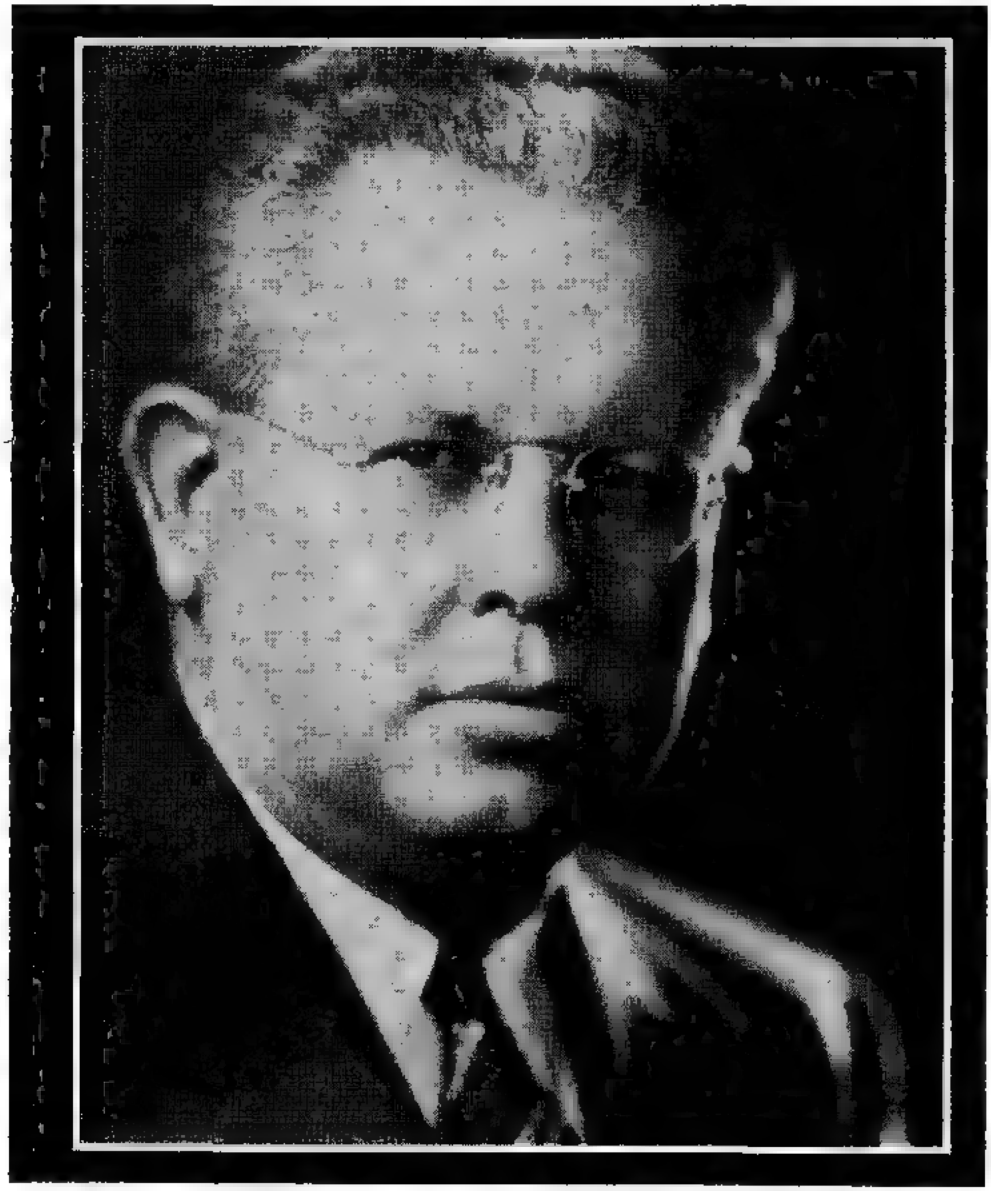
Bob Ford was aroused. He felt that the three should be put where the law prescribed that all naughty highwaymen go.

Applied justice, like providence, moves in mysterious ways her blunders to perform. Bob Ford, on his own admission, was tried and sentenced to the State Penitentiary for a term of several years. Evidently the officials and the people of Cripple Creek did not believe Ford's accusation of the three distinguished citizens.

Whether they were guilty, I do not know. They never went to jail. Bob's vengeful crusade for the right was only partially successful.

Rumor says that the day after Bob Ford came in with blood dripping off the point of his chin, substantial deposits were made in the bank next door to City Hall by certain leading citizens. Rumor also tells us that they were the same men who were attacked by the Wells Fargo driver. One had ridden the hills for days at the head of a posse.

I don't know what became of Bob Ford after he left prison. Once in a while I wished that when he got out of the penitentiary he would come back to Cripple Creek. Then I might have displayed a pair of long trousers which answered definitely the insult that lace would sometime be sewed to the bottom of my "picnic pants."



Ralph L. Carr, 1940. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Department

☆ ☆ ☆

The Original Picture News Service

IN these days of camera miracles, when the bombing in London this morning is reproduced in pictures on the front page of San Francisco's evening paper; when movies make life more real on the screen than it is in its actual unfolding; when color films drive the living painters out of business; when news picture magazines tell of world events in such graphic form that it is no longer necessary to expend the energy to read, the conclusion is apt to be reached that we are living for the first time in the era of picturized news stories.

I can't say how he would have rated as an artist in the critic's discriminating eye. The things that loom so large in childhood's view lose their stature as the years roll by; the beautiful things of our home towns often become drab when we return to visit them in adult years; but to me he was, and still is, the world's greatest artist. But I don't even recall his name.

His studio was on one side of the busiest barroom in the boom gold town's main section. His canvas was a huge blackboard that covered the opposite wall from that against which the beautiful mahogany sideboard stood. His brushes and oils were a box of colored crayons. His subjects were the news stories in the daily papers that came in from Denver each afternoon on the Wells Fargo Express wagon and later, when it was completed, on the railroad.

As soon as the newspapers reached town a great canvas was pulled on a wire stretched the length of the room to hide the blackboard. Then the little bartender would doff his apron and go behind the canvas with copies of the *Rocky Mountain News* and the old Denver *Republican* under his arm. For the next half or three-quarters of an hour we would hear the nervous scratching of the crayons on the blackboard, and we knew he was punctuating something when little taps broke the silence. He usually started his work about the time the men started coming down off the hill from the mines at the end of the day's work.

Many devices were used to attract customers to the drinking resorts. One of the most successful was that of the little blackboard artist, who served as a barkeep when he wasn't busy making pictures. There was always a crowd awaiting the drawing on the canvas. Each afternoon, with all the pomp and

(Continued on page 39)

36 YEARS BEFORE THE FOUNTAIN PEN WAS INVENTED—

COVINGTON was manufacturing hand and foot powered grinders for gem coral and sea shells. They now offer a selection of over 200 modern pieces of lapidary equipment and accessories.

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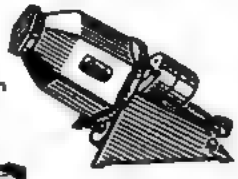

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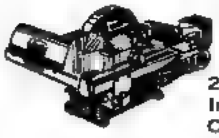

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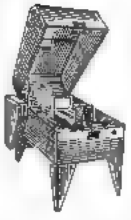

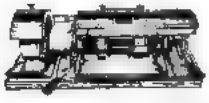

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South Dakota Gold Streams

(Continued from page 22)

actually below sea level. Hard rock miners work there in temperatures of 130 degrees. Conditions are extreme, but alleviated by millions of dollars worth of air conditioning equipment.

Today's miner has a far different environment than his early day counterparts. The 1977 miner travels to the work level in an elevator that descends at 3,000 feet per minute. He moves about in his working area through timbered passageways with underground railways built for the movement of ore. The working area is cooled by huge fans and portable refrigeration units that circulate air through the mine. Blast holes are drilled by air-powered drilling machines. Ore is scraped with powerful machinery and then drawn through air-powered gates into ore cars. The busy underground railroad system at Homestake functions on all levels as trains of up to 20 cars move the ore to shafts where it is then hoisted to the surface.

Homestake employs more than 1,600 people. Half of them are actual miners, and they are the only people who see the underground portion of the mine.

Lead is definitely a mining town. Homestake's surface works dominate the skyline. The terrain really isn't suitable for residences—they're glued on steep hillsides a la San Francisco. A newcomer to Lead would swear there are no level streets.

Mining traditions live on in Lead. For example, you can still buy a pastie (meat pie) at the City Bakery on Main Street —89 cents—on Thursdays. Pasties are an import, brought from Cornwall, England, by immigrant miners. They constituted the miner's lunch in early days. Many of the men carried their pasties underground underneath their hats, to keep the lunch warm. The standard recipe calls for steak, potatoes, and onions wrapped in pie dough, though individual recipes might include peas or turnips.

Lead's mining character will undoubtedly live on, though the future of gold "is limited in a sense," say Homestake spokesmen. "Homestake has proven gold reserves of over 15,000,000 tons, and as long as the gold price stays up, Homestake will be a producing mine."

PLACER MINERS can still be found working the creeks and streams in the Hills. They may not sport grizzled beards, gnarled hands, and the ability to "spit tobakky 30 foot across Duck Creek," but they are just as adventurous as the prospectors who stampeded to the hills 100 years ago. Goldpanners bent on making a living were apt to leave behind the marginal deposits and stick to the good stuff. That leaves room for today's amateur, who may have gold fever just as bad as the 19th century miners.

Amateur or not, it's wise to pay attention to the lessons of the early goldpanners. There's only one way to locate gold—trial and error. But some armchair research before bending your back will improve your chances of finding gold immeasurably.

South Dakota Division of Tourism Photo

A technician at a Rapid City gold jewelry manufacturing company etches designs on a new ring.

Study maps of the Black Hills. Go to the library and check out books dealing with Black Hills ghost towns, gold mines, history, prospecting, geology. From the comfort of your living room, your armchair prospecting will soon convince you there are two or three specific sites you just have to try.

Talk to local folks when you arrive. Many of these will tell you where others have found gold, and where it's likely that you can still find some.

Remember that nature has done the hardest part of your work for you. She's eroded her treasure from gold-bearing ores and concentrated particles of free gold throughout the streambeds in South Dakota's Black Hills.

Gold is a very dense, heavy metal, just like lead. Keep that in mind during your prospecting. Find a fast-moving stream, look for places where the current suddenly diminishes, allowing gold to settle out, then use your common sense.

In streams that flow on bedrock, the gold will be trapped in holes, pockets, and other irregularities in the bedrock. Where the water runs through boulders or layered rocks, use the sand and grit from the crevices. In riffles, try the creekbed material at the uppermost riffle. At just about every location, placer gold is likely to be hidden in the bottom-most layer of gravel in the streambed.

Some of these gold-bearing waters are Little Spearfish Creek, Annie Creek, Castle Creek, Rapid Creek, Iron Creek, Boulder Creek, French Creek, and the headwaters of Spring Creek, Box Elder Creek, Little Elk Creek, and others. Your forebear prospectors found gold in these streams, so there's no reason you can't.

(Continued on page 38)

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By ETHEL KIMBALL

Photos Courtesy Author

SOURDOUGH GOLD

THE rainbow-chasing Goff boys were trying their best to settle down. Summer after summer Charles, Judson, and Guy had dug and panned for gold all the way from the Yellowstone River to the California Coast, carrying everything they owned in their wagon—or forsaking wheels for the back of a horse if the journey was too rough.

Gradually they had decided that a rolling stone took too many hard knocks. They put a block on the wagon wheels and settled on a chunk of land near Challis, along the banks of Idaho's famous River of No Return. They put up a cabin, started accumulating a herd of beef cattle, and tried to put prospecting completely out of their minds.

But during the winter of 1906 snow piled high, and there really wasn't much to do after their cattle were fed each day except to read everything they could find. Fate must have chuckled the day that *Saturday Evening Post* came, bearing a special article written by Rex Beach. It was all about the latest discovery of rich placer diggin's in the Fairbanks section of Alaska.

Charles Goff, in later years, mentioned that article in his memoirs: "Fairbanks creek. Cleary, Dome and Vault creeks. The Chatanika Flats where there was a hundred feet of frozen muck before you struck the underlying gravel. Big, wide creek bottoms all holding a promise of untold riches once you hit the pay stream. The author [Rex Beach] wove a tale that fired our imaginations and fanned our waning hopes into raging flames. We were young, ambitious and more than willing to work—and there was Alaska just waiting to shower her wealth of gold on us if we would just expend our energy and experience in the right direction!

"Life is but a gamble at best, and a prospector is just gambling with Mother Nature that he can discover her secrets and find her hidden stores of minerals. You gamble with her, yes, but you can't run any bluffs—you have to persevere in your purpose. Of course, if you are lucky it is much easier and quicker. And we were almost convincing ourselves that our luck was due to change.

"On one hand Alaska beckoned, her frozen creek beds offering shining virgin gold. On the other hand, there was our budding cattle ranch, with a nice bunch of stock holding us back. But not for long! By this time we considered ourselves experienced prospectors, and we figured we could go to Alaska and show the old 'Sourdoughs' a few new wrinkles. We were young and had a lot to learn!

"Prospecting and mining were the things we most wanted to do, so once again, desire overruled common sense. We sold our whole outfit. And late in April 1907 we made a start for Alaska and the 'pot of gold at the rainbow's end'."

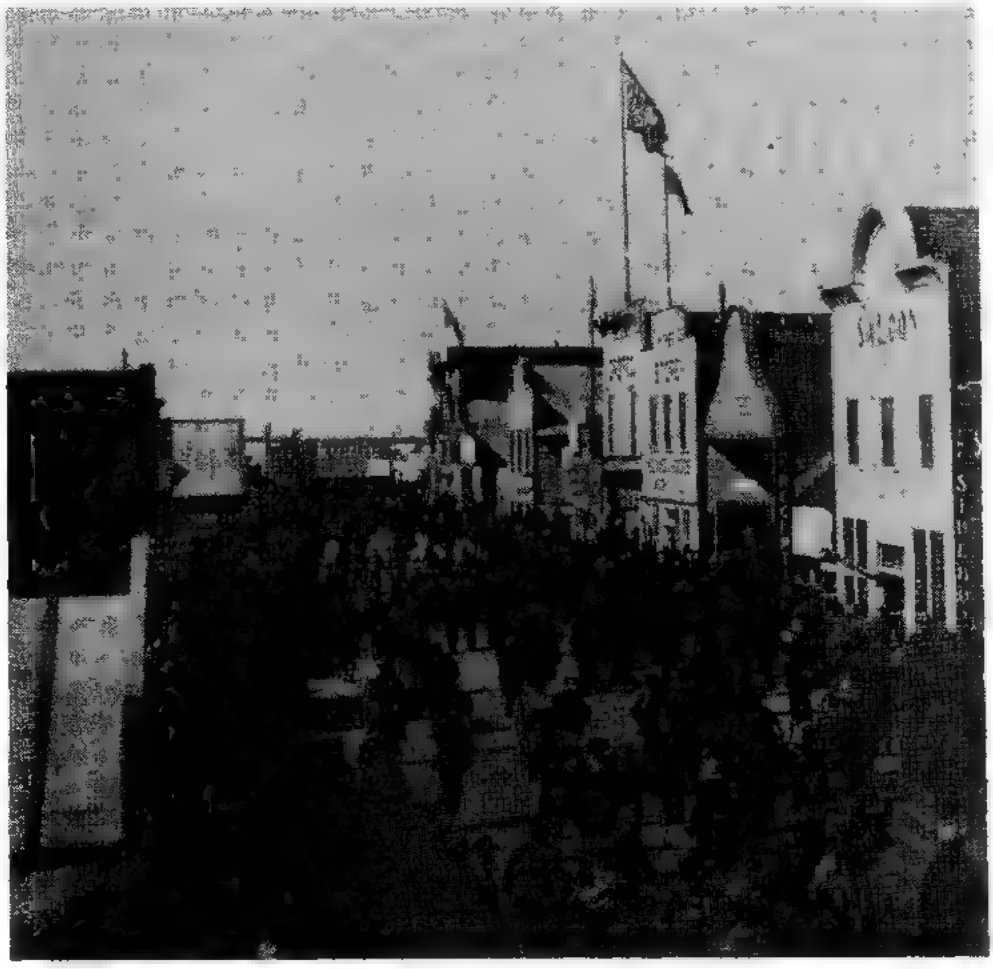
AT Seattle the Goff brothers outfitted with clothing and footwear for the cold northern country, and feeling flush with the stake they had from selling their ranch, bought first-class tickets for Fairbanks.

As Charles put it: "At midnight on a night late in May we went aboard the little wooden steamer *Humbolt*, bound for Skagway and adventure. Well, do I remember that night! Walking up the gangplank I tread on air, and stepping to the deck led me onto the magic carpet that was to carry us through a wonderland of marvelous scenery and strange sights—and on beyond, where the rainbow touches the beckoning hills. It was my first trip on the ocean, and I was so thrilled I had to keep swallowing the lump that rose in my throat."

However, on reaching Alaska, the brothers found themselves almost at a loss as to what to do next in this new, frozen land. After many failures they teamed up with four Sourdoughs—Jack Bruneau, Will Godin, Ole Crosby and Edd Trickle—and located a claim alongside the Yukon River. They named it the "Sevenup." Then they gave a man at Mouse Point a half interest in the claim for the use of a portable steam-thawing outfit for the winter.

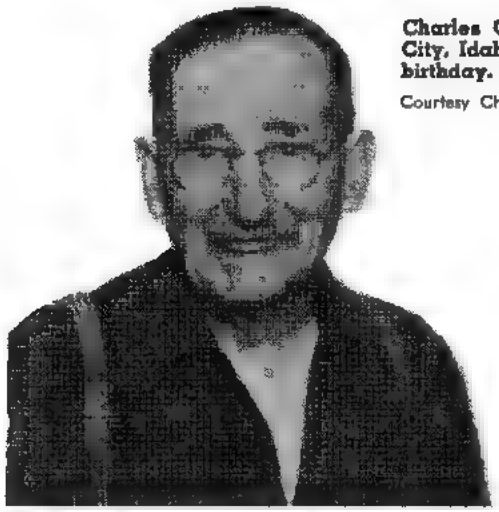
Godin, Bruneau and Trickle went to

Nome, Alaska. Courtesy A. C. Warner Collection, University of Washington, Seattle



A ranch couldn't hold these Idaho boys — they had to go North to thaw out their dreams!

Mouse Point about thirty-seven miles up the Yukon, loaded the boiler, pipe and thawing points on a raft of logs, and headed downriver. Then the seven hopefuls set the rig up on a sloping bar about fifty yards from the river and began sinking a prospect hole. There was very little frozen muck or silt overlying the gravel there, and they got a fair showing of fine gold in each pan.



Charles Goff at age 91, while in Salmon City, Idaho. He died in 1971 after his 93rd birthday.

Courtesy Charles Goff

But at a depth of twenty-two feet they struck thawed gravel; and Godin, who happened to be driving points at the time, got pretty wet before he could get the equipment and himself hoisted out of the hole. They had sunk the hole so close to the Yukon that when they got below water level of the river the gravel was thawed and the water raised in the prospect hole until it was two feet deep. So that was that. They had to abandon the hole.

About this time there came a raging snowstorm. The men waited it out. When the weather finally settled, they rigged up a sort of sled to haul the steam-thawing outfit on, and made draft horses of themselves, dragging the 500-pound rig up Ruby Creek to the divide, then along a ridge a short way and on down into Big Creek. This was about three miles from the cabins they'd built at the mouth of Ruby Creek earlier in the season.

Without delay they began sinking a hole, and at eighteen feet they hit a slate bedrock which was criss-crossed with a stock work of little stringers of sulphide of iron, locally called "white iron." It carried some gold, but not enough to pay. That hole proved another dud, and again they moved the rig.

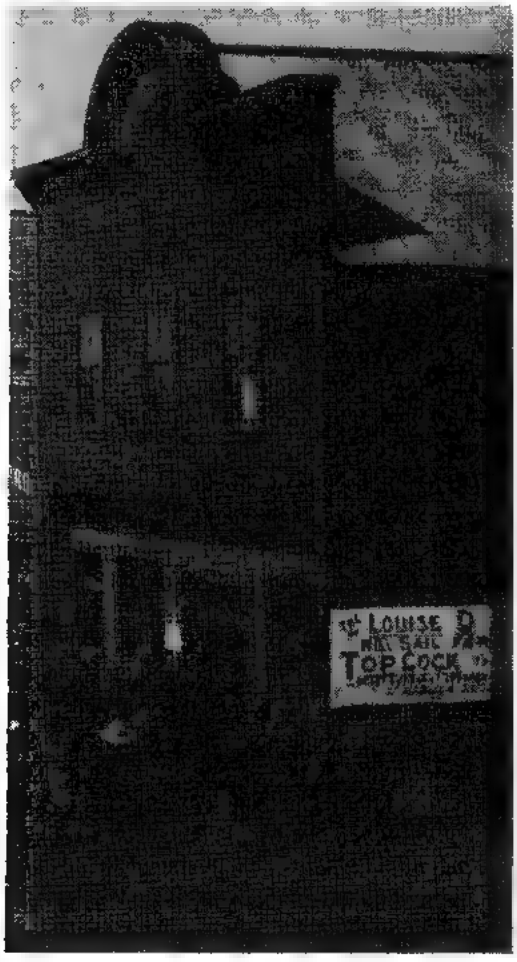
Up Big Creek and out on a flat-topped ridge between Big and Beaver Creeks was Skookum Bar, with a white quartz gravel channel they hoped would be just one one-hundredth as rich as the original White Channel on Bonanza Creek up in the Klondike country. Bruneau was almost sure that when they hit bedrock they'd find a layer of pure gold there.

But after they thawed through the solidly frozen gravel for about twenty feet they struck thawed gravel composed of sand and slightly rounded quartz gravel, with no sediment at all to bind it together. It was so loose they couldn't even timber it and make it safe to work in after it got over thirty feet deep.

Thawed ground is the bane of the prospector in the interior of Alaska. The only remedy is to freeze the hole on down, but that is such a slow process the boys decided against trying until some later date.

In every hole they sank on Skookum Bar they got the same results—a few fine colors of gold in every pan from the surface down as deep as they went, but never improving with depth.

Some of the Sevenup crew kept prospecting with the steam thawer until someone left water in the pipes and they froze and broke. As there was no way to



Below, river travel was a hazardous but necessary part of living in the Far North.

Courtesy A. C. Warner Collection, University of Washington, Seattle

fix them in the dead of winter, the Seven-up organization died a natural death.

THE Goff boys kept trying, however. With no thawing equipment left, they began "burning holes" in a way taught them by Bruneau, who had had years of experience in the Far North. As Charles explained it:

"Bruneau first put a layer of small split wood in the bottom of the hole, then a layer of larger pole wood in the bottom of the hole, then a layer of larger pole wood, leaving a small opening in the center which he filled with fine kindling wood and dry birchbark. Now he placed a layer of small green logs on the dry wood, still leaving the opening in the center. Next he cut big sections of green moss and placed a thick blanket of it on top of the last layer of wood.

"It was ready for firing. Reaching down into the center with a lighted match, the dry birchbark and kindlings flashed into a quick flame. He told us that the green wood and moss hold the heat down and keep the hole from thawing and sloughing too much on the sides."

They burned one hole on Ruby Creek thirty-four feet to bedrock, going through thirty-two feet of frozen muck which they picked and shoveled into the windlass bucket and hoisted to the surface to dump. Striking gravel at thirty-two feet, they thawed it with wood fires, and when they hit bedrock they started a side drift at the bottom of the hole. But there wasn't much chance to cover the fire to keep it from heating the sides, causing a lot of sloughing.

One morning Judson and Guy went over to clean the thawed muck and gravel out of the hole. Judson got into the bucket with a lighted candle, and as Guy lowered him slowly, Judson hardly noticed that the candle flame was flickering as he neared the bottom. Then the flame died. For a few seconds he wasn't sure whether it was the darkness or imagination that made him feel dizzy. Suddenly he knew!

"Gas!" he yelled to Guy above. "Hoist away! Fast!"

Guy reversed the lowering process, hoisting that bucket in record time. Putting the pin in the windlass post so the crank couldn't turn, he grabbed Judson and eased him out of the bucket onto the logs of the windlass frame, gasping but safe.

The Goff boys had just had their first encounter with charcoal gas, a type of carbon monoxide formed when the sides and top of the drift had sloughed so much that it covered the fire and burned the wood into charcoal. Bruneau had warned them of this, and they had thought they were being careful. From then on, they always fanned the hole by tying the four corners of an old blanket or piece of canvas to the windlass rope and dropping it, then rapidly hoisting it. Doing that a few times creates a sort of down-draft, forcing fresh air down the prospect hole. To make doubly sure, they would lower a lighted candle to see if it was safe to descend.

As the cold weather set in, more men kept drifting in to Ruby Creek to build themselves cabins of sorts. By midwinter there were thirty or more in the district, all sinking holes to bedrock, trying to find pay dirt. After a month or so, with no one finding pay on any of the creeks or gulches, most of them took to loafing around their cabins or visiting their neighbors and playing Solo, a popular card game.

Courtesy Charles Goff

The Goff Brothers' home at Leesburg was a mansion compared to the log shelter they built on Ruby Creek, Alaska.

By mid-March the prospectors had well-beaten trails through the deep snow to every cabin on Ruby creek. When they wanted to go anywhere else, however, they had to use home-made skis or web snowshoes. No one wanted to go very far anyway, because they had given up prospecting by that time.

CHARLES remembered that long period of waiting. "During the winter months the moon, when full, takes the path of the sun on the longest day of the year, and the glorious moonlit nights of the sunless days were just as wonderful as the long summer days.

"That big globe shining from a cold, cloudless sky seemed twice as large and many times brighter than back in the mountains of Idaho. It seemed one could reach out and almost touch the silvery ring around it! For a week at each full moon the country was turned into a Fairyland as its shimmering light glistened on each snow-clad tree and bush, changing their white mantle of snow crystals into sparkling jewels. There were many nights that one could easily read a newspaper by its light.

"When Aurora Borealis chanced to show in all its brilliant spendor, then indeed, the sky and all the land was transformed into a glorious wonderland of mysterious beauty.

"At the mouth of Ruby creek there was a period of six to eight weeks during

Winters were also rough in Leesburg Basin, Idaho, as shown by this photo of the old Dutch John Quartz Mill on Arnett Creek.

Courtesy Charles Goff

the shortest days that the sun never peeked over the low hills at the head of the creek. But you could climb to the top of the ridge at midday and see a sun away to the south, so wan and low that it did not cast a shadow.

"By the middle of May the ice began to rise in the Yukon river. I remembered that when cold weather had first set in and the heavy shore ice had begun to form, it had seemed quite odd to see the old Yukon begin to fall and leave a sheet of sloping ice down to the water's edge. The river had kept dropping until there was ten or twelve feet of ice frozen solidly to the sloping banks of the river. I had figured that the many springs and small streams were frozen dry, or 'glaciered up,' as the Sourdoughs call it. That caused the mighty Yukon to fall at least ten feet vertically during early winter.

"Then, when the days started to get quite long in early May, the sun began to melt the accumulated snow and ice, and the old river began to rise and break her icy shackles. The pressure of water under the ice became so great that it was broken loose at the edges and lifted as the water continued to rise. By the middle of May the ice had come up about six feet, leaving a narrow channel of open water on each side of the river.

"Approximately the 24th of May the ice began to move down the river. Slowly at first, as it forms mighty ice jams on each turn of the stream. Finally the relentless pressure breaks a jam and plows right across a bend, mowing down trees and brush as if they were match sticks. Again a big ice jam forms at the bend below Lime Bluff, and huge blocks of ice pile up twenty feet high. But the mighty river keeps stacking the ice up into fantastic heaps until something has to give way, and with a grinding roar the ice buckles and great chunks stand on end. The ice gorge is on the move once more.

"A 'Cheechaco' becomes a 'Sourdough' when he has seen the ice run in the Yukon or any of the large rivers of the Northland. Believe me, it is a very proper initiation to the worthy clan!"

WITH the coming of spring, the restless prospectors at Ruby Creek scattered, each to test his own winter's dream of gold in some favorite spot. The Goff boys worked themselves to the breaking point at every new diggin's they tried, but never found more than a showing of gold. Each failure left them just a bit more discouraged.

As Charles put it: "You had to wade through green, wet moss, shoe-top deep, stumbling over lumpy nigger-heads once in awhile in the creek bottoms and flats. And worst of all, stirring up clouds of ferocious mosquitoes at every step! We had to wear a head net made out of barber-netting when moving in the hills, or the blasted mosquitoes and gnats would just about eat you up.

"We were getting pretty well disgusted with the conditions we had to contend with up there. In the summer one had to pack, on his back, grub, mosquito-proof sleeping tent, pick, pan, shovel, cooking utensils, and as few blankets as he could get along with. We just didn't make many long trips overland!

"There was no game such as moose and caribou in the Ruby country. And last but not least, as long as we had definitely given up the idea of ever settling down to ranching again, there was some unfinished business pertaining to a gold-bearing quartz ledge and plenty of deer and grouse in the Shoup country of central Idaho!

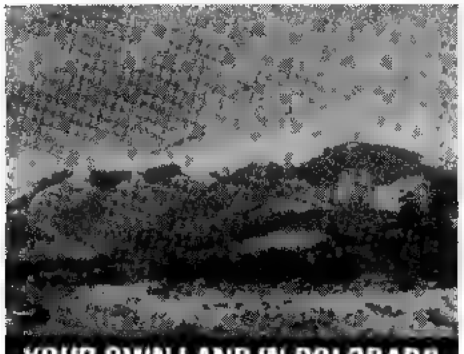
"Guy was determined to stay until winter again, but after considerable dilly-dallying Judson and I decided to head back for Idaho. The passing years proved this to be a rather foolish decision, because in 1910 some persistent Swedes were to hit the pot of gold on Long creek, the very area we were leaving. But that is nothing—I wouldn't be alive today if the 'Foolkiller' had been around on several occasions that I can recall!"

Having made up their minds, they went to Kokrines, a trading post thirty-five miles up the Yukon, and settled up with the Northern Commercial Company's storekeeper, where they had previously sold gold and got supplies. After getting the money due them, Charles and Judson came back to Ruby Creek, loaded all their belongings on their poling boat, *Gem State*, and on the 18th day of July 1908, headed downstream for St. Michaels and the Outside.

(Continued on page 58)

Miners at Forty Mile Post, Yukon Territory. This site was named before the present international boundary line was established. It was located 40 miles on the (then) Canadian side.

Courtesy Sea Card Collection, University of Washington Library



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South Dakota Gold Streams

(Continued from page 32)

Note one warning: don't be a claim jumper. Most of the Black Hills—the 1.4 million acres of the Black Hills National Forest—is public land. But both private and company mining claims still exist in the Hills. Either be certain you're on public lands, or ask permission to enter private lands.

Usually, if you're in an area of someone's claim, an assessment notice must appear nailed on a post or tree at the claimsite. But the only foolproof way to be sure is to ask someone who lives nearby.

PLACER MINING demands a certain amount of equipment, for instance a gold pan. Gold pans come in three sizes, with 9-inch, 12-inch, and 15-inch diameters. The casual panner should opt for the 15-inch size. It will take the job from start to finish just as well as the little ones, but it lets you begin panning with a great deal more raw gravel.

You'll need a shovel, preferably of the spade type. You could carry a small pick, but don't overload; fresh air might be the only treasure you'll take out of your mining expedition. Finally, get an old, dusty miner's hat. (You can't look like a prospector without that hat.)

When you've found the spot, start panning. It's a simple process of elimination. Heap your pan full of placer gravel dug from likely places listed above. Flood the pan with water, submerge it, and let it sit on the bottom of the creek. With your hands, stir and swish the gravel around in the pan. Leaves, sticks, humus, pine needles and mud will float up out of the pan and drift away in the current.

Next rinse off all rocks bigger than an inch and pitch them out of the pan. Make sure the mud and grit stuck to the rocks falls into your pan.

Now hold the pan level and shake it vigorously from side to side. Any gold will sift its way to the bottom of the pan. Then face the current and tilt the pan about 30 degrees so the water flows in. Continue shaking the pan from side to side and gravel will begin to sift away out over the lip of the pan and be carried away.

If larger stones refuse to wash out of the pan, pick them out with your fingers and discard them (after making sure you're not pitching away a nugget). Continue panning until you're down to a couple tablespoons of material.

This is your "pay dirt." Typically, it will be mostly fine black sand, and often it will contain bright red garnets about the size of match heads. And with a little luck, gold! (The garnets, unless quite large, and without flaws, are worthless.)

Drain practically all the water from your pan, and give it a gentle swirl to spread your paydirt out thinly over the bottom of the pan. If there's any gold, you'll see it. It looks like what you think gold looks like—shiny, metallic, and bright yellow in color. It does not tarnish and it won't be stuck to other materials. It will be 100% pure gold.

"Nuggets" are bigger than one-half inch. "Pea Gold" is the size of a pea. "Fish" are flat, elongated flakes. "Flakes" are thin, flat wafers that vary from pin-head size and up. "Gold Dust" is just that—pure gold sparkles about the same size as household dust. All of them are called "colors."

As you examine your paydirt, *think small.* Nuggets and pea gold are extraordinarily rare these days in the Black Hills. Think one-quarter inch and smaller. Most placer gold in the Hills occurs as fish, flakes and gold dust. Use tweezers or the tip of your little finger to remove gold from your pan and cache it safely in your poke (a small glass vial works just dandy).

Just about any jeweler can verify whether or not you've found the real McCoy, gold. But there are a couple of on-site tests you can try. First, gold is shiny—whether it's dry or wet—which makes it easy to differentiate from yellow rocks. Second, gold is very soft. (Remember in the Western movies how everybody always bit a $20 gold piece to see if it was real?) With your fingernail, you can dent or bend a gold flake. It's unlikely that your fingernail will break it in two, and if the flake shatters or crumbles, it wasn't gold in the first place.

From start to finish, it takes an amateur about 10 minutes to process a pan of placer gravel. But it's a long 10 minutes, squatting or bending over in the creek with icy waters washing at your feet. During the 1876 Black Hills gold rush, fifty pans was considered a day's work for a seasoned miner. And not every batch of gravel "pans out" for the prospector—either then or now.

BLACK HILLS gold jewelry, handmade and produced in South Dakota, in the forms of rings, cuff links, necklaces, earrings, brooches, tie bars and numerous other pieces, can alleviate the heat of gold fever.

The art of making the jewelry was begun in this region during the gold rush of 1876. The jewelry is distinct because of its leaf and grape design and is nearly the same today as when it was first produced a century ago.

The history of Black Hills gold jewelry is as much legend as fact—folklore says a young artisan became lost on his way to the Hills during the Dakota gold rush and fell asleep from weariness and desperation. While asleep, he dreamed of a rushing stream with a grapevine and grape clusters hanging over the water. He awoke, continued traveling, and over the next hill found the stream and grapevine he had dreamed about. The young jeweler eventually found his way to Deadwood and began fashioning the jewelry in his dream design.

While not denying the legend, history traces a clearer route, having the design utilizing the three colors of gold originating in California after the 1849 gold rush. Historians believe the jewelry pattern worked its way eastward through itinerant miners and artisans. One of these, Edward LaBeau, arrived in the

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Hills during the 1876 gold rush and opened a shop in Central City near Deadwood and began creating and selling the jewelry he made out of gold mined in the Black Hills.

LeBeau trained many of the early Black Hills gold jewelry designers in the craft. In 1878 Squire T. Butler came to the area from Montana, and also began manufacturing Black Hills gold jewelry. In the early 1900s Butler's son George began operating their firm.

The two firms that dominate the jewelry making industry today, F.L. Thorpe, Deadwood, and Black Hills Jewelry Manufacturing Company, Rapid City, both descended from these early-day businesses.

So even if your prospecting in the Black Hills doesn't pan out, you can still go home with some native gold as a memento. Prices range from $9.00 for a charm to $175 for a knuckle-duster man's ring. Old Horatio Ross would have considered that a real good deal!

A Cracked Head and a Broken Heart

(Continued from page 31)

ceremony of the uncovering of a triumph in sculptured marble, Tom Lorimer, owner of the place, would draw back the curtain and display the work of his bartender.

I WISH that there existed some photographs of what he drew in those few short minutes for the enlightment and entertainment of the people of Cripple Creek. Everything of interest appearing in the newspapers was graphically depicted on the blackboard in colors of white and red and orange and green and blue. He must have possessed a knack for portrait painting. In other times, under different conditions, he would surely have gone to the top. His ability to tell a story with a few strokes of the crayon must have spelled the artistry of success with proper training.

I remember particularly a great picture of the ice palace in Montreal, showing skaters in unguessed numbers on the ice that gleamed under the lights as beautiful as any movie ever depicted such a scene. As I recall it, there were two figures in the immediate foreground on skates, and as they passed one was handing a package to the other. The caption underneath told the story of a lost wallet that had been picked up by one of the skaters and handed back to its owner with only a nod of the head as they whizzed past each other. A large sum of money had been contained in the wallet and its loss would have been a blow to its owner.

Pictures of mine accidents, of prison breaks, of horse races, a drawing of William J. Bryan making his Cross of Gold speech at the Chicago convention in '96, pictures of other notables under every circumstance and condition of life, with a little story printed under each, which in itself, I know now, was a standard of brevity and clarity. In fact, I think my first hankering to chase news stories must have been born in some of those

(Continued on page 42)

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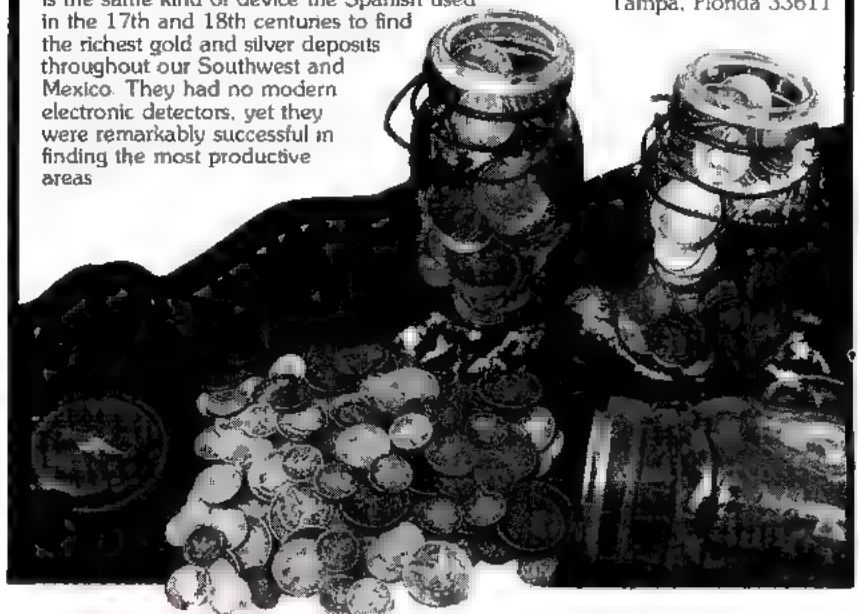


Wild

Above, one of the many caves offering shelter on Mesa de Anguila. At right, looking through St. Elena Canyon toward the east from Mesa de Anguila. Below, the author rests in a smoke-charred cave.

Photos Courtesy Author

Another area cavern.

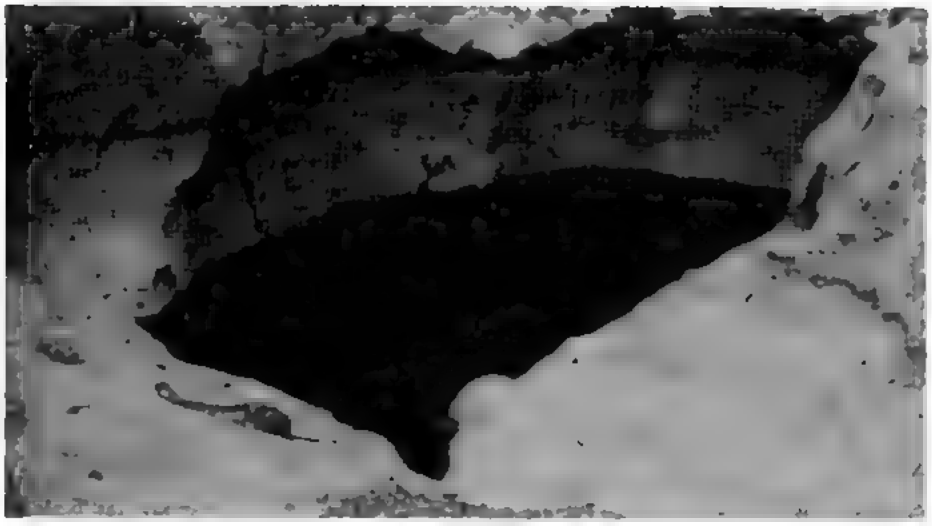
ANGULO'S DIM TRAIL

By Roy F. Carpenter

MESA DE ANGUILA is Mexico's northern extension of Sierra Ponce. It is also Big Bend National Park's side of noted St. Elena Canyon. This 20-25 square mile mesa with its many caves is said to have been the home of Angulo, the last Comanche Indian left in the area. Alsate, the last Apache to have lived in Big Bend, favored the Chisos Mountains and his legend is well known; Angulo's existence is hardly more than a rumor. His name is mentioned in Madison and Stillwell's book, *How Come It's Called That?*, but the rest of Angulo's story is mostly buried in legends handed down by native herdsmen and the old, old men along the middle Rio Grande.

At this late date it may be impossible to document Angulo's hermit-like rendezvous with the harsh wilds of Mesa de Anguila. I backpacked ten times up "Idiot Wall" and camped solo several times in Bruja (Witch) Canyon on the mesa, looking for evidence to prove the possibility that Angulo inhabited the

Old Days!



Above, one of the tinajas (waterholes) in Bruja Canyon. Below, one of two barricades discovered by author on the western slope of the mesa. It commanded an ideal ambush site across an ancient trail.

NEVER FORGOTTEN

By Ralph A. Fisher, Sr.

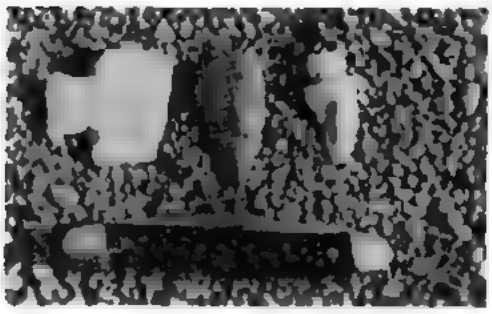
FOR A MONTH one summer, over twenty years ago, I managed the vast seventy-section cattle ranch ten miles west of Payson, Arizona, deeded and registered as the Doll Baby. Some seventeen sections of the permit range extended into the Mazatzal Wilderness Area, where cattle compete with the deer, javelina, elk and countless predators for food.

The owner at that time was Delbert Pierce of Scottsdale, Arizona. Delbert asked me to take over the Doll Baby while the ranch caretaker was gone on vacation.

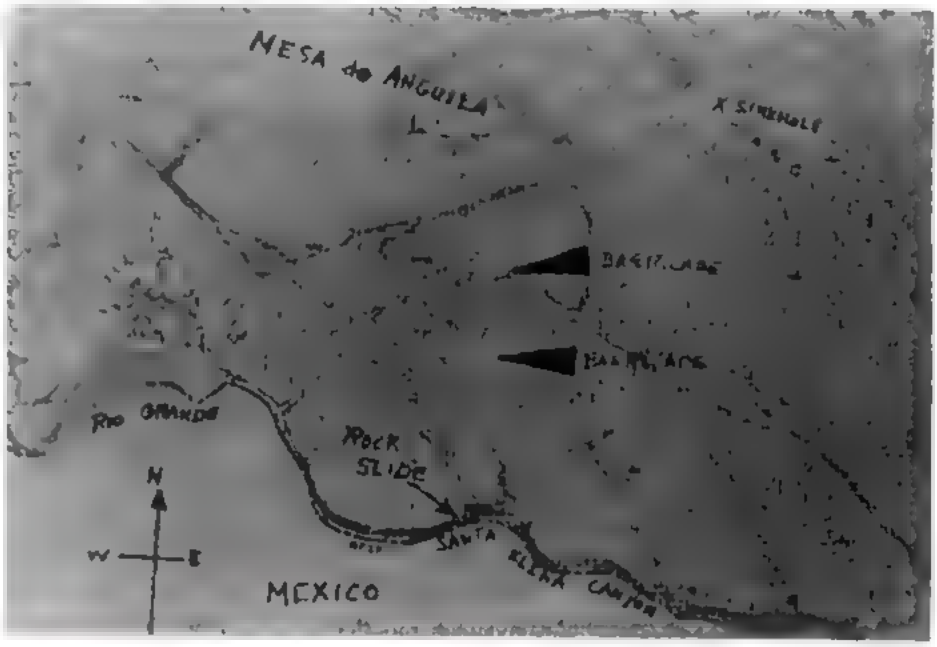
For company I took along my young grandson Bobby and Bobby's friend, the

(Continued on page 42)

Bottom left, flint points and old belt buckle found on the mesa. Below, portion of USGS map showing the approximate location of the two rock barricades on Mesa de Anguila.



caves of that cactus garden upland. Water can be found in hidden *tinajas*, and old trails lead down to the river. Javelina, deer, dove, quail and catfish could have provided his food. From the photos I took, the reader may draw his own conclusions. Any firm evidence of Angulo's living on Mesa de Anguila would be most welcome. One of those unexplored cave shelters might hold his skeleton. Who knows?



A Cracked Head and a Broken Heart

(Continued from page 39)

days when I stood before that blackboard with my newspapers under my arm, and read and saw enacted the important happenings of the day.

Nothing coarse, nothing objectionable, ever appeared in those pictures or in those stories. The artist had talent. He possessed a soul. What a shame that his masterpieces were washed off the blackboard and lost to the world each day!

Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 41)

son of Marshall Smith. We arrived at the ranch as the caretaker and his wife were departing.

During the day we rode the range high on Black Mesa, and spooked deer; witnessed a cougar kill a crippled doe for her breakfast; watched cacti-feeding javelina; spooked countless Gambel quail and fished for rainbow trout in the huge pool in the East Verde created that summer by a family of beaver.

We had many happy hours searching the hills for Indian ruins, but the most interesting find was a blue granite headstone resting on a white quartz boulder. It was well hidden in a dense growth of stunted brush along the bank of the river, not too far from the ranch's original log cabin. We took pictures of the stone and upon the return of the vacationers in early September, asked the man's wife if she could tell us anything about it.

The lost gravestone as it appeared when discovered by the author and his young grandson on the Doll Baby Ranch in 1950.

Photos Courtesy Author

The old ranch house on the Doll Baby Ranch. 10 miles west of Payson, Arizona.

"In the early 1900s," she said, "a young family by the name of McDonald arrived at the Doll Baby to take over operations. They were a young, newly married couple bravely facing a start in life in these lonesome hills. Besides Apaches, there were very few people in this country."

She said that on September 23, 1902, a baby daughter was born at the ranch, but little Carrie Bee contracted pneumonia and died two days later. The nearest doctors resided in Globe, the county seat, over one hundred miles to the east, or in Phoenix, another hundred miles to the south over rugged mountain roads.

The baby was buried by her parents in a small grave near the cabin. A few years later the couple moved from the Doll Baby and were soon forgotten.

Forgotten until in 1952, that is, when a man appeared at the ranch one summer day in a horse-drawn buggy, and introduced himself as a brother to Mrs. McDonald, who had recently died in a California hospital. The uncle of little Carrie Bee had brought with him a granite headstone with which he hoped to properly mark the baby's grave. It seems that Mrs. McDonald upon her death bed had exacted a promise from her brother to this effect.

Unfortunately, time had removed all trace of the child's resting place, so Mrs. McDonald's brother simply chose a protected spot and left the marker as a memorial. It is a memorial, too, to a fond young mother who did not forget.

THE LUCK OF BERNIE BRYSON

By Donald E. Getz

SOMETIME early in 1872, the Beachey-Wines and Company Stage Line, operating between Hamilton in White Pine County and Pioche in Lincoln County, Nevada, was held up and robbed near Eberhardt. In the shootout that followed, driver James Mann was killed and the road agents took six bars of gold bullion from the stage. The road agents hid the bullion, valued at $100,000, in a small grove of dwarf cedar trees near Eberhardt's boothill cemetery (White Pine County), planning to remove the bars later to Denver, sell them to the mint, and light out for parts unknown.

The two robbers, John Watson and Dub Benton, were arrested in Pioche on suspicion but were turned loose due to lack of evidence. The pair fled east to Denver to hide out until the hue and cry had died down and they could return to Eberhardt for their gold.

But then as now, thieves do fall out and Watson and Benton were no different. They had a vicious quarrel and Benton stabbed Watson to death.

Shortly after the murder, Benton went insane, and was committed to a Denver asylum. In his mutterings while secured in a padded cell, he told his attendant, a young fellow named Bernie Bryson, of the burial of the gold bullion taken from the stage. After the death of Benton, Bryson went west, found the grove of dwarf cedar trees, and thirteen steps west of the first tree in the group, found the small mound indicating the spot where the bullion was buried.

Bryson was successful in locating the gold, which he promptly bundled up in his carpetbag. He caught up his horse, and headed for Hamilton, where he took the next stage to Elko, and bought a railroad ticket east for Denver.

Bryson, after selling the bullion to the Denver Mint, squired and married a fine, young lady from Iowa, and settled down. He even became a money-lender of note, but the Mint had alerted Wells Fargo to Bernie Bryson's sale. Their detectives kept a watch on him for awhile, but when they determined he could not have had a part in the 1872 stage robbery, they turned their attention to other duties.

Bryson must have had a few misgivings, for he provided a fine marker for Dub Benton's grave in Denver's potters field, thereby relieving his conscience.

It was not until shortly after the turn of the century when Bernie Bryson was on his death bed, that he confessed that he had dug up the stage loot in Nevada.

Wells Fargo then stepped in and tried to confiscate the remainder of Bryson's cash holdings, but a Federal Judge ruled that the statute of limitations had run out, and Bryson's widow was allowed to keep her inheritance.

Bernie Bryson was laid to rest where he had specified—right next to the grove of dwarf cedars where he had dug up the stagecoach loot of six gold bars, hidden there by two luckless outlaws!

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Tramp Miners

(Continued from page 17)

Tempiute, Nevada when it closed down (1957).

The Ruth Mine itself was a disaster as far as I was concerned. It had been idle for many years, and, too, I knew very little about dynamite (the miners always called it powder) and was afraid of it.

All went well the first three days, then we drew our pay and everyone but me got roaring drunk down at Argus in a little place called very inaccurately "The Friendly Place." I never seen so many fights and tough people. I didn't drink at that time so I just sort of sat in a back booth and watched.

After three or four had been thrown out and a couple whipped, I started balancing in my mind how well I could fight against how fast I could run. I finally left and went back to the mine with an old fellow who had a battered Model A (there were still a few around in 1949.)

Monday morning started out bad. I found two sticks of dynamite laying on a beam in the mine just under the lagging. It had been there so long it was all dried up and nothing was left in the paper except the pure nitro crystals. I picked it up, put it to my head and shook it. I could hear the nitro rattle inside like grains of rice. (Wayne Winters will need a drink if he reads this, Pat. Ha!) Old Charley yelled at me, and just about fainted. He had a terrible hangover anyway and he gave me a ten-minute lecture on powder and a few other things. I noticed all morning he kept looking sideways at me and shaking his head. My turn was to come.

WE finally got a bunch of holes drilled and then Charlie couldn't find a cap crimper so he started putting his charges together by crimping the caps with his pocket knife—and he was shaking so bad he couldn't hold a cup of coffee to his lips.

I just walked away from him until he by some miracle got it done. We yelled, "Fire in the hole!" and went on down another tunnel or drift and started examining a wooden chute that came out of a hole overhead called a stope. While standing in front of it a board under my feet cracked and one of my feet went through. I got off of the rotten boards and stooped over to shine my five-cell flashlight down into what I expected would be a small hole.

It was bottomless, or so it seemed to me, but was well timbered with a rotten looking old ladder going down one side. I picked up a big rock and dropped it down the hole and I finally heard water splash far below. Old Charlie laughed at me but I was starting to have some second thoughts about being a miner.

A little later in the afternoon my career as a tramp miner came to a close. I had helped old Charlie load an ore car with about a ton of low grade gold. I stepped on the back of the car where a foot-brake was located and started riding it out the downgrade to the grizzly (a type of grate) over the ore bin.

I soon found out I had no brakes on the car and I mean to tell you it was really rolling. It went so fast it blew out the carbide lamp on my hard hat and I guess I was praying that them rails in that mine had been put in by ex-gandy dancers off the Union Pacific or someone equally skilled.

All at once I burst out into the sunlight and saw ahead of me a wye (Y) in the tracks. The branch to the right went to the ore bin. The one to the left went off a cliff about 100 feet high. Don't ask me why they laid rails there but they did.

I was praying the loaded car would take the right fork and go to the ore bin. Well, I was only partly successful in my prayers. The car took neither fork. It stopped dead, throwing me over the top, and tipped over nearly burying me under a ton of gold ore.

That was enough for me. I tossed my hard hat on top of the pile of spilled ore and headed downhill to my cabin. Shouldering my packsack and bedroll I was soon on my way down-canyon to Trona.

I never saw old Charlie again, but heard that he had been killed in a cave-in somewhere out of Winnemucca, Nevada. Montana Red and I have crossed trails many times since then.

The old tramp miners are about gone and if you try to get a job with a mine now, you'd better be able to pass a stiff physical.

As recently as 1965 there was quite a few of the old miners camped behind Ed Grimshaw's store at Tecopa, California. They used to like to get into the hot springs at Tecopa.

I guess Ed Grimshaw knew an awful bunch of them. So did Louis Lemaire who ran a store for many years at Battle Mountain, Nevada; and Helen and Cowboy who ran the bar in the old hotel at Mina, Nevada.

I know we will not see their like again in this land, but while they were here they were a very necessary part of the Old West and of course existed up until recent times. They never worked long in one spot but just wandered around working here and there and sometimes getting a stake together and prospecting for a while.

So let's say "so long" to the tramp miner, just one more breed of wanderers I once knew who were part of the West and have now passed on through the door that never opens outward.

Don't look down on them because they wandered. Instead, admire them for the freedom they had. They, like all wanderers, loved to sit by a small campfire and hear the wind coming in off a thousand miles of desert, sighing through old trees or old buildings and seeming to whisper the same message it has carried to wanderers since time began.

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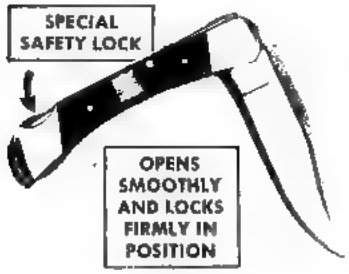

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Smithwick's Bowie Knife

(Continued from page 16)

This was indeed a banner day in our study of Texas history, and one that I will always associate with the feeling shared by all treasure hunters when they discover something too good to be true.

I suppose one might say that I also shared one of the fatal *errors* of treasure finders. I talked! One of my listeners was a man of much wealth and a goodly knowledge of history to-boot. The knife and owners were tracked down, and "hunter," as we shall call my listener, confirmed what I already knew—that the knife was genuine and the student was a grandson of the Smithwick who perished in his cell at Huntsville.

Money in quantity—most of the time—is a great and powerful mover, so the Smithwick Bowie found its way from the old family trunk to the plush glass-covered case where it rested with the "hunter" for a number of years. During this time, tests made on the metal proved its age beyond all doubt, and its mode of fashioning further established the genuineness of the Smithwick Bowie. The "hunter" was still at work, however, in his quest through museums and prime collections of edged weapons seeking to find if there might exist still another Smithwick Bowie knife. To my knowledge he never did locate one.

Finally death overcame the "hunter" and the Smithwick Bowie went on the block in a somewhat strange manner. The family heirs were anxious to be rid of those strange things dear to the "hunter" but not negotiable at the bank, so they piled up mounds of guns, knives, swords, and Indian relics in a jumble and sought out appraisers and buyers in a much hurried fashion.

By this time I had moved to North Texas and was located within easy driving distance from the "hunter" with whom I had often visited. When the materials were gathered for sale, I was called along with others to appraise and to buy.

On short notice wealthy buyers are not always readily available, and the selling went slowly in the opinion of the heirs. In their haste many items were bunched for fast sale and did not bring the hundreds or thousands they could have commanded even then. In short, I acquired the Smithwick Bowie at something less than the price the "hunter" had paid—which was generous to be sure, and lavish to the Smithwicks who were much concerned with daily bread.

The Smithwick Bowie is a gold mine in terms of Texas history, particularly when it is shown and explained to students. Should it rest in a museum under lights and on a backdrop of green velvet? Perhaps, but not just now. I often think that I am not unlike the "hunter"!

The West's Best Hidden Horror

(Continued from page 15)

they were very good friends and all except Bill were good people. I think Bill was bad before he came to this country. Ellis' father told me, before he was my father-in-law, tales about McNew's wild life. He said the first man he killed was a sheepherder. 'McNew, even as a boy, was a renegade', Ellis' father said. 'You know where the last of the nineteen men he killed is buried (that was my father), and I know where the first one is buried, the sheepherder he drug to death in Texas.'

"One thing I'll always appreciate my Uncle Jim Gilliland for is this: my mother had goats and sheep to take care of and although we had Mexican herders, she herded them herself and we children also herded when we weren't in school. It was lonely but that was our livelihood. Bill McNew had a ranch at Oro Grande. He used to have one on the Sacramento River, up in the mountains next to the Oliver Lee ranch, but he sold it to Ellis' father. McNew knew my mother very well, he knew her before she married, and after my father was dead he kept coming around. She was alone, with no one to protect her, and so he kept pestering her, saying such things as, 'Lucy, now you know we could be friends; let's let bygones be bygones.'

"Finally my Uncle Jim Gilliland told McNew, 'Bob Raley and I didn't get along but I'm going to tell you something: you'd better let Lucy and the children alone—if you don't, you'll answer to me.' McNew didn't bother Mother any more after that.

Mr. Wright broke in and said, "You know about that Fountain killing? Well, what Jim said to McNew was, 'If you don't leave them alone, you won't get off like you did cutting the Fountain kid's throat.'"

Mary interrupted quietly, "The Fountain killing took place before my time, and the accounts of it were just stories to me. But my father's killing—I actually lived that. My Uncle Jim was only seventeen or eighteen when the Fountains were killed. He ran with Oliver Lee when he was just a big kid and Lee told him what to do and A. B. Fall told Lee what to do, I guess."

Mary was asked if her mother wrote a letter to the Fountain family after her husband, Bob Raley, was killed, as some accounts state, in which her mother reportedly said that if she had testified at the trial—as she should have—maybe her husband would still be alive.

"I think somebody got mixed up there," Mary replied. "If my mother wrote to the Fountains after my father was killed, I didn't know anything about it. However, she knew that Bill McNew was involved in the Fountain killing. She worked for Mrs. McNew for awhile, but my mother would only have been seventeen in 1896 when the Fountain trouble took place. She was twenty-two when she married in 1901."

Mr. Wright interjected, "You see there were no bodies ever found, and I asked George Gilliland, Jim's younger brother, what they done with them. I said, 'You know durn well the posse come up there from Cruces and they couldn't have buried them that fast going across that sand without leaving enough signs for them to follow.' George said they never were buried, that they carried them to Wildy [Wilde] Well. A steam pump was there and McNew said, 'Cut them up and burn the pieces in the boiler.'"

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"Uncle George was the one that was told to haul the mesquite wood and pile it out there," Mary said. "They ran the boiler with mesquite wood fires. I've been at Wildy Well quite a lot of times; the boiler was used to pump water. Uncle George told Ellis that he hauled the wood and he said the others didn't tell him anything—he was just about fifteen—but he would listen to them talking. Of course this is just hearsay, it was before my time, but we did hear it from Uncle George."

Mr. Wright added, "George also told me the posse trailed them to Wildy Well, but 500 head of cattle were running there and the cattle were driven over the trail. When the men at Wildy Well left for Lee's Dog Canyon ranch, George said they left one at a time on the cow trail.

"Ellis and I once worked for Mr. Lee and he was always good to us," said Mary Wright. "I don't think he was an angel, I never saw any halo over his head, but he helped a lot of people and he was nice in lots of ways. If a Mexican needed work Lee would give him work—anybody needing anything, they could go to Lee and would always get it. He was involved in this—we can't doubt that—but later on he got to be a well-respected man and he was our representative from Otero County for several years. His family was respected too; Ellis went to school with his oldest boy, Hop Lee.

"Mr. Lee had a home on the Sacramento River; he built a wonderful ranch house there after he moved up from Dog Canyon, but he sold out eventually to the old Circle Cross Cattle Company, and became their general manager. That was an enormous spread—it reached from Cloudcroft to the Texas line. We worked for him on his ranch for two and a half years before he sold out."

In conclusion, Mary Wright gave some particulars on Jim Gilliland's final days. "In his late years Uncle Jim settled down and bought a ranch in the San Andres Mountains which the government later bought up for the White Sands Missile Range. While he had the ranch he almost lost his eyesight. There was a big drought and he would have to burn the thorns off the prickly pear cactus with a gasoline torch so his cattle could eat them. This affected his eyes so that he had to have one of his nephews or some of the neighbors drive him around. He died in Hot Springs, now Truth or Consequences, about 1946."

"Struck Oil"

(Continued from page 23)

year Williamson signed a contract with Andrew Birrell, a theatrical agent, that was to take him and his new wife first to Australia and then on around the world.

Williamson was looking for new material to take with him on his tour when he was approached by an old miner, Sam W. Smith, who when he wasn't chopping wood, splitting out railwood ties and the like, often wrote plays. Smith, born in Fayette County, Indiana, in 1831 was educated for the law. He taught school for a while. Then when the gold fever broke out, he went to California. After varied experiences he enlisted in Company A, 4th Infantry California Volunteers in 1861, and served until 1866. He was commissioned Lieutenant of his company by Governor Low, but he was popularly called "Captain" Smith by old Californians.

IN 1870 Captain Smith made quite a rich strike in the gold diggings but three years later he went to San Francisco where he lost everything in one of James C. Flood's big stock deals. While walking the streets trying to devise means to get a meal, he decided to try to sell one of his plays.

He approached several actors around the city but they showed no interest in his manuscripts and he was about to burn them in despair when he met Jimmy Williamson and showed him "The Blue and Grey" about the Civil War. Although Williamson did not care for the play he asked if Smith had any others to offer.

"Well," replied Smith, "I have another piece if you'll let me read it. It's called 'The Deed, or Five Years Away.'" (Coincidentally it was set in the oil dis-

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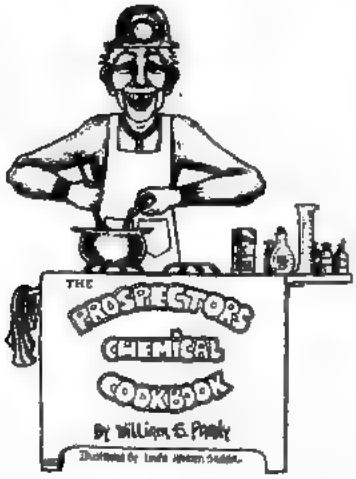

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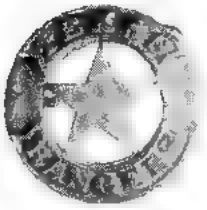

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tricts of Pennsylvania near Williamson's own birthplace.)

Smith read his play to Williamson, who thought it had possibilities despite the fact that in its original state it did not contain a part for his new wife. However, Williamson bought the play outright, paying Smith one hundred dollars more than he asked. He then arranged for a friend, Cay M. Greene, a San Francisco playwright, to revise it and write in a part for Maggie.

Greene found the work more difficult than he had expected and bogged down in the second act. When he handed over the results of his work, Williamson haggled over the payment and insisted that $150 ought to be enough. Greene reluctantly accepted and was paid in full, but he later regretted he had signed away his rights to the royalties which continued to roll in for more than forty years.

Williamson took a company from San Francisco to Salt Lake City in February 1874. Though he was still dissatisfied with the play, he decided to try it out, so it was put into rehearsal. One Sunday morning he set to work upon the last act and wrote and rewrote it to suit his own ideas, giving out the parts to the company as he went along. The next night, the play which had been renamed "Struck Oil" opened at the Salt Lake City Theater.

"Struck Oil" tells the story of John Stofel, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, who in order to pay off the mortgage on his farm arranges with his landlord, the scheming Deacon Skinner, that in return for the deeds to the farm he will undertake Skinner's military obligation. Stofel receives the deeds from Skinner, hides them behind a brick at the back of the fireplace, and goes off to war telling his wife that under no circumstances is she to sell the house. In the second act Williamson gave a riotously funny performance of John Stofel as a raw army recruit.

After the initial performance in Salt Lake City an old Major-General in charge of the Utah military forces was especially enthusiastic in praise of Williamson's acting. Williamson suggested that the scene might be regarded as burlesque by military men.

"No, by God, sir," said the General, "I've seen scores of recruits like John Stofel, men from farms and mining camps, whom you could never get to drill or march right. There was only one mistake in it. Instead of a brass band when the regiment left for the front, you should have fifes and drums."

"I don't know where to get a fife and drum band here," Williamson replied.

"I'll fix that up," said the General, and sent his own band along the following night.

The last act of the play takes place five years later. Stofel returns from the war a badly wounded man, his memory gone. Deacon Skinner tries to swindle Mrs. Stofel out of the house which has increased in value because of nearby oil strikes, but after a spectacular fall from an oil derrick Stofel dramatically recovers his memory and is able to save the family fortune and reveal Deacon Skinner for the cheat and fraud he really is.

The season in Salt Lake City having proved a success, Williamson presented the play in San Francisco. However, he was advised by all the "experts," including the captain of the ship taking Williamson and his wife to Australia, that a play which relied upon characters speaking with Pennsylvania Dutch accents would be a sure-fire failure in Australia.

The experts were wrong. "Struck Oil" made a great hit with Australian audiences and they flocked to see it. The play ran for seven weeks in Melbourne alone, a phenomenal run for that period.

Within a few months of Williamson's arrival in Australia he was able to send back $10,000 to his bank in California. Later the Williamsons moved on to India for a brief visit, playing at a theater in Calcutta, and then on to London.

A little over three years after they had left California, the Williamsons returned to San Francisco for a second brief presentation of their play, having appeared in it around the world more than 600 times.

Using funds raised by the long tour of "Struck Oil," Williamson in 1879 was able to obtain the Australian rights to the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas, then at the height of their popularity. He and Maggie Moore returned " down under" and made their home there.

In the following years Williamson created and controlled a gigantic theatrical empire throughout Australia that was, by 1905, estimated to be worth around $5 million. It was considered then to be the world's largest company of its type.

James Williamson died in 1913, but the company he created lives on in Sydney, Melbourne, and in New Zealand. When the latest hits from Broadway or London arrive in Australia, the legend in lights above the marquees still reads "J. C. Williamson Ltd. presents. . . ."

Terror to the Rustlers

(Continued from page 27)

issued for the arrest of John Rippie.

On the following day Will Mayes and Banister went to Foraker. The next day they went to Rippie's ranch and arrested him. They took him to Pawhuska, where he gave bond for his appearance in the District Court.

IN her book, *Banister Was There*, Leona Bruce, daughter of John R. Banister, sums up the importance of the Cattle Raisers' Association of Texas:

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So the next time you sit in some dark theater, gripping the edge of your seat, while on the screen the guns pop, the rustler gang flees from the posse, heading for the border with a great herd of stolen cattle, remember it isn't necessarily so. Much truer to life would be the tireless dedication to duty performed by old-time sheriffs and cattle inspectors such as John R. Banister, my grandfather.

Dirty, Lowdown Polecats!

(Continued from page 3)

in. Don't misunderstand me—I flat LOVE it when the dam breaks! Those gift subscriptions, renewals and extensions of your own subscriptions at Christmas gift rates is our life's blood. Fact is, I'd like to have six or seven dams break—starting June 1st and ending the following May 31st!

What I am trying to say is, that we have about a four-week period that is so fast we are snowed under. But SONOFAGUNDOGGONE! It makes me excited just thinking about those pre-Christmas good times. You folks are so generous in including friends and loved ones on your gift lists that we can actually start back eating real food three times a day. That jerky gets sort of common-tasting after so long....

I asked the boys and girls in our Circulation Department what caused you and them the most trouble and their eyes lit up like a sparkle of dew hit by an early morning sun. They told me it would be like rowing a canoe through the clouds of heaven if you blessed folks who pay our bills would take a gnat's-eye glance at the following:

1. Even though there is a "PLEASE DISREGARD IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RENEWED" on all renewal notices, still we are flooded with "Why did you send me a notice—I have already renewed!" from people who have sent their money in and do not see the "Disregard" notice or want to double check. It would take sixteen pages and a telephone call to explain the *why* on all these things—and I'm pretty sure you aren't bubbling over with excitement about learning the technicalities anyhow.
2. Allow six to eight weeks for your first issue to arrive. Again there could be seven pages of explanations on this but you are interested in *results* and not explanations. I had better say here, however, there is such a wide practice these days of magazines sending the current issue when you subscribe (and some of them send several back issues and count it on the subscription!) that we adopted the policy of starting your subscription, not with the issue already out, but with the next issue. We had too many folks write in telling us they were a little late in renewing and had bought the current issue from a newsstand and for gosh sakes start with the *next* issue. So we adopted the policy of beginning your subscription with the next issue after order is received. This has caused some problems in itself but not nearly so many as sending everyone a current copy as soon as their subscription is received.

I am trying to touch on as many problems as possible and it sure gets lengthy. Anyhow, if you will allow six to even eight weeks for your first issue to arrive before writing us, it would cause both of us a whole lot less sorrow. Renewing when you receive your first notice is sooo

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smooth! Waiting until *after* your subscription has expired and we have pulled your card is where most of the difficulties begin.

3. To insure prompt service, give *exact details* of what you want. Sometimes it is sure hard to figure out what a particular person is ordering. If I had room here I would reproduce one of our daily reports. Some letters read merely, "Please send a year of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES" and enclose checks which run all the way (so help me this is true!) from $1.75 to as high as $20.00 for that one order alone! The in-betweens are $4.25, $6.75, $9.25—name a figure from one to twenty and we've received it for a one-year subscription. No problem here, however. The girls figure out what you are due on whatever money you send in and put you down for that number of issues.

   Before I forget, there are many letters with no return address. Most follow-ups are polite relative to why they haven't received their order but we receive some scorchers. We keep a "no address" file and enter the order upon receiving a complaint—but sometimes we never hear from those who failed to include their address and I am wondering if they forgot about the deal altogether or figured they got a good ripoff and let it go at that.

4. We all know the hassle of moving, but if you can send in a change of address so that we get it by the 10th of the month, or the 15th at the latest, you won't miss a single issue. Again, at one time we mailed the current issue to the new address immediately but got so many letters to the effect that they had already got the current issue at the old address—well, I'm getting mixed up myself! I have been in the publishing business seems like 385 years and I can go into that Circulation Department, go over some of their problems, difficulties and mishaps that can occur and I come out shaking my head and looking for a dead snag to climb, pull out my hair and scream at the birds!

5. There are several colors on the RELICS binders, so would you nice folks be sure and specify color.

6. Seems like there is a heap of trouble relative to understanding that, overall, subscription rates for OLD WEST, TRUE WEST, and FRONTIER TIMES are the same. In short, one year of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES is $7.95 (12 issues). Twelve issues of OLD WEST is also $7.95. I suppose this rate misunderstanding arises because OLD WEST is a quarterly. Anyhow, issue for issue, you pay the same for all three magazines.

NOW, after all this explanation of our headaches and your headaches, I probably have you *really* confused! Ever try to do your dad-blamedest to set *everything* just right— and fall on your face hard enough to make the ceiling cave in after you? At any rate, one thing I have noticed all my life is that if I make a mistake with a certain person, the devil smiles like a jackass eating briars and makes *sure* that I make another mistake in trying to correct the first one!

If I haven't put over anything else but the fact that we publish these magazines to send to you readers and not to rip some of you off by *keeping them*—this labored writing will not have been in vain. But if it seems the trail dust still has the situation clogged after you write the Circulation Department a couple of times, write Joe "Hosstail" Small and I'll get it straightened out if I have to stay up all night doing so.

Oh yes, what a happy ending it would be if about half of you folks would send in your Christmas gift subscriptions in October, November, or even January if you can't make it sooner. Many of you are still sending gift subscriptions through March. That is fine so long as you aren't among those who send in letters postmarked December 24th and the message reads: "*Be sure* and send Dad a gift card before Christmas!" Those letters are received the 26th, 27th, or 28th generally and we simply haven't figured out a way to get poor old Dad that card before the 25th!

Here I am being my regular old long-winded self and I haven't touched on but about one-tenth of the difficulties that can arise, including misdeliveries, lost in the mails, and so many other human errors which we have no control over. It gives me the blind staggers even to think about going into all that stuff!

I do want to end this thing up sometime this month, however, so I'll just say that we received a letter the other day wanting to know whether Hosstail was Pat Wagner, Joe Austell Small, or just a handle somebody uses because he can't think up a better name. Well, I never did exactly cotton to that Austell middle name of mine and figured I'd amuse myself by signing one of my so-called editorials "Hosstail." Well, you folks dropped Joe in a half-second flat and it has been Hoss or Hosstail ever since.

So I don't need to sign this one—you've just read every name I ever had—well, those that can be printed, I mean! HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A MERRY NEW YEAR!

A Very Special Strongbox

(Continued from page 29)

Thom was afraid of lending it for exhibition. As the train was touring Montana, he heard many rumors of valuables being stolen. Several Montana museums had asked to display the strongbox also. Thom refused for the same reason: He had lost his prize twice and recovered it; next time he might not be so lucky.

One day, in 1964, a stranger saw the strongbox and offered Thom $15,000 for it. This was the real test. Did money mean more to him than nearly a century of history?

"Maybe I should have sold that box

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when I was offered the $15,000 for it," Thom said pensively. "I don't know why I feel so deeply about keeping it. It's just that I found it. It's a part of something that really happened in pioneer days and when I found that strongbox, then maybe I became a part of that history. I guess people can't understand how I feel about it."

Even though the box was empty, Thom's curiosity led him to track down its past. A year after he found it, in 1923, he was working on the Alex Woolfold Ranch near Roundup, Montana. There he met an old Lavina ranchhand named Harry Smite. In 1888 Smite had been part of a posse sent after some robbers of a stagecoach. When Thom told Smite where he had found the box, Smite was sure it was the one he and the sheriff had tried to recover. Smite had quite a tale to tell of treachery, murder and escape.

The stagecoach had started out from the area of the Spotted Horse Mine at Maiden, north of Lewistown, with a heavy load. One passenger, a woman, was picked up on the way. Its destination was Billings, almost 200 miles away, considering the two mountain ranges (the Judiths and the Snowies) it had to cross. The road was merely a trail in places and the swaying and bouncing of the coach, nearly tipping it over at each bend, made the trip hazardous.

The team of horses was straining and sweating at the effort of pulling that coach over some of the ridges. It was believed by the posse later that the shotgun guard on the coach was part of the gang of robbers. Perhaps during the journey, he was dreaming of how he and his friends were going to spend the gold. Every once in awhile, he would pat the strongbox and chuckle to himself in anticipation. The stinging rain, piercing his face like knives, wouldn't bother him that day.

AS THE STAGE continued south and crossed the Musselshell River, past the settlement of Lavina, the guard glanced toward the east in the direction of Horse Camp Ranch. The ranch was originally a base camp used by the '79 Cattle company of Texas in the grazing of their stock. But more often than not, it was a hangout for gangs of wild horse wranglers, suspected thieves, murderers, and general rascals.

The terrain was smoother now and the coach rode easier. The countryside was mostly sagebrush, some pines and sandrock. The team, however, could be spooked by the many rattlesnakes the area was known for, so the driver had to keep his eye out. Seven miles south of Lavina, the stage pulled out of a creekbed and up Painted Robe Hill. At the top was a group of pines and one huge bull pine, 20 to 30 feet tall. The driver eased up to rest his team.

That was the spot the robbers had chosen. They materialized out of the trees with rifles pointed. One grabbed the lead team's bridles while another shouted for the strongbox to be thrown

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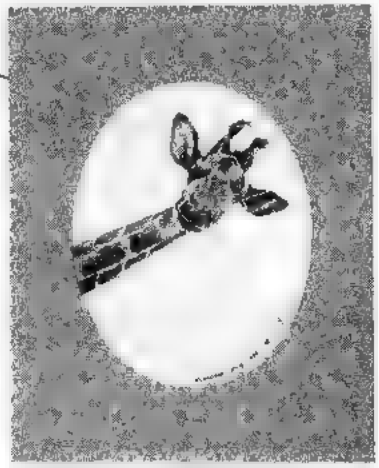

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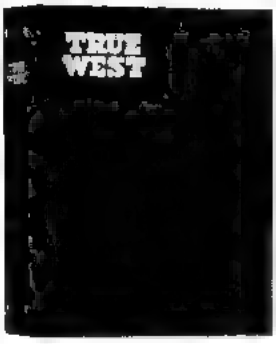

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down. In the next few moments, bedlam broke loose.

The driver reached for his rifle and was instantly shot and killed. In the ensuing gunfire, one of the team horses was shot. The lone woman passenger was ordered out of the stage. They searched her purse and baggage. She had $60 with her but the robbers evidently weren't interested in such a paltry sum and let her keep it. She and the strongbox were loaded into a wagon that had been hidden behind bushes, and all headed north.

The woman was terrified, wondering what her fate was going to be. But when they neared Lavina, for some reason the outlaws let her go. She walked to the stage station in town and reported the holdup.

Immediately a posse formed, Smite among them, and headed northeast toward a spot where they might be able to intercept the gang. They knew the robbers couldn't go too far or fast with that wagon. The sheriff and his men caught up with them north of Lavina. The robbers found cover in a ravine. The posse attacked but they had to pull back because the outlaws' gunfire was too heavy. The outlaws all had rifles while the posse only had shotguns.

The sheriff was outgunned and just couldn't get close enough. He sent a rider to get help and more fire power, but by morning it was too late. Sometime during the night, the gang must have ridden off to Horse Camp Ranch. Knowing they had the posse outgunned, they could take their time dividing the loot. They riddled the bottom of the strongbox and pulled out the gold. It's a wonder the posse didn't hear their wild hoots and hollers. Not wanting to press their luck too far, they hurriedly buried the strongbox out of sight in the ranch's root cellar.

The outlaws then figured they'd better scatter for awhile. Some rode east, some in other directions. They wouldn't have to be split up too long, though. As many stage robberies as were occurring at the time, the posse would soon be chasing another set of thieves. The outlaws were never captured, nor the strongbox seen again until Thom found it.

Except for its two brief sojourns the box hasn't left Thom's possession since. When he and his family bought a ranch and settled at the base of the Snowy Mountains near Lewistown, Montana, his father kept the box on their front porch. "My dad really liked it," Thom remembered. Having started its journey near there in 1888, in a way it had come home again.

"I'll Kill 'Til I Die!"

(Continued from page 19)

For a brief time it looked as though the problem could be settled without more bloodshed. But Barnett had been incensed at the death of Noah Partridge, and he let it be known that he was out to get Mutaloke.

Mutaloke, on the other hand, had been officially charged with the murder of Partridge but, in accordance with Creek custom, was allowed to go freely about his business until time for his ease to be heard. He chose, probably for safety reasons since feelings ran high, to wait in the neighboring Seminole Nation.

Then, to arrange for his trial defense, he returned to the Creek Nation in the company of Thomas Adams and Judge John Freeman, in January 1888. The three men went to Tulsa Town, met with Perryman, and the four were walking down the street when Wesley Barnett suddenly appeared and challenged Mutaloke.

Mutaloke's death was the signal for more armed night-riding, and as Barnett dodged about the hill country, he and his men occasionally clashed with a vigilante band. Finally in November a posse cornered Barnett and his gang in the house of a fullblood, Alex Carr, who lived near Wealake Mission. The fighting was hard. One lawman, Mose McIntosh, died and two others were seriously wounded. Yet, as the sun slowly fell behind a low line of hills and left behind the chill of a dark November night, Wesley Barnett and his four companions rode away unharmed.

They left behind them a message for Wallace McNac. McNac had shown himself personally determined to end Barnett's career and had already spent days tracking Barnett, his gang, and their stolen horses. The more McNac failed, the more determined he became until even Barnett began to worry. During the fight at the Carr place Barnett sent McNac a message that if McNac continued his hounding, he could expect to end up one more notch on Barnett's rifle.

In spite of the warning, McNac continued his search. Another month of hunting passed. Barnett's luck began to break. In December several of his gang were captured. They were hauled to Fort Smith to stand before Judge Parker for the murder of young McIntosh.

Not too long after that, McNac got his chance. It was Saturday, January 12, 1889 and McNac was part of a posse looking for stolen horses. The men, under Deputy U.S. Marshal Dave Rusk, went to the house of John S. Porter to put up for the night. While hunkered around the crude dinner table they were surprised as the family warned of the approach of men on horseback.

The possemen grabbed their guns and took up positions outside in the deep shadows of the cabin. Silently they waited, listening to the night sounds and the muffled thud of hoofs against packed dirt.

Steadily the approaching group of men became more clearly outlined against the cold, star-studded sky. There in silhouette rode Wesley Barnett and one of his men, Wiley Bear, trailing extra saddle horses.

Wallace McNac remained motionless in his squatted position behind a barrel. He riveted his eyes to the burly form of Barnett and then caught his breath as the two men halted their horses at the gate. There was a short, inaudible conversation and then Barnett came on alone, his roving eyes taking in the Porter house. Suddenly Barnett stiffened and then recoiled into action, reaching for

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his gun as a command of "Throw up your hands!" split the air. But Wesley Barnett never so much as got his gun leveled before McNac's shot knocked him out of the saddle.

McNac's barrage was followed by a charge of belated shots hurled in the direction of the gate and Wiley Bear. But Wiley, forgetting the extra horses, fled into the night, leaving his companion dying in the cabin yard.

Wesley Barnett's year of hell raising was over. In that time he had cared little for property rights, taking what he needed when he came across it, particularly horses, and preferably from white men. He had sat a horse tirelessly, riding about the Nation night and day, in good weather and bad, swimming and wading his horse back and forth across the Arkansas River. And all through the year he had carried a rifle which, by that fateful Saturday night, had five notches and four brass tacks in the stock. Wesley Barnett had killed at least five men, and now he too was dead.

"The Crazy One"

(Continued from page 11)

add to their growing doubt, the end of the three years she had specified as the end of the world came, and nothing happened. People who had permanent camps at the Rocks abandoned them to return home.

When a previously devoted couple with a little girl informed the Prophetess that they were leaving, she replied, "You can laugh now, but it won't be long before you'll be back, crying." And it wasn't. In less than thirty minutes they returned carrying the dead body of their child.

The sheriff and coroner of Fresno County were summoned, and when they arrived they placed Mariana under arrest and took her to the county seat, charged with killing the child. Within a short time, however, she was released for lack of evidence.

Mariana returned to the Rocks, burned her cabin, and left with the money extorted from her followers. She went to Poso Chine (Coalinga) and lived in luxury until her money was spent. Celestine Romero, grandmother of Ruth Parra, worked for Mariana as maid. Mrs. Romero, who lived to be 115, died in 1925.

When the prophecy as to the time of the destruction of the world failed to materialize, people started calling Mariana, "La Loca" (the Crazy One). Even her most devoted followers became disenchanted. She went back to tending camp for sheepherders, drifted about the plains, and drank heavily.

In 1901, when Ruth Parra was seven years old, she was in a wagon with her uncle in Lemoore. They saw Mariana walking along the railroad track. Mariana knew Ruth's uncle well. She stopped them and asked him to buy her a drink. He got a small bottle of wine and they talked for some time while Mariana emptied the bottle.

Ruth innocently asked, "Why don't you wear a hat?" and Mariana replied that she didn't have a hat and that she didn't have much hair either. She was old, wrinkled, and almost bald. Ruth remembered her as thin and pitiful.

In the spring of 1902 Mariana was camp tender for a woodcutter near Kingston. Just before noon of April 12, 1902 she walked the railroad track into Kingston for something to drink and while on her way back to camp was struck by a train and killed instantly. A coronor's jury, as reported by the *Hanford Journal* of April 14, 1902, determined the cause of death as having been struck by a Santa Fe train while intoxicated. A bottle was found near the scene of the accident. Her age was estimated as seventy and the jury decided that the accident was unavoidable by the engineer. It added that she was thought to be mentally deranged.

The Catholic Church at Hanford has no record of Mariana, La Loca's, death or burial. As there is no potter's field there, she could be buried right next to some grave with a magnificent headstone. Maybe the person buried beneath the big marker wouldn't object too much to lying close to that famous old lady, the prophetess of the Joaquin Rocks and the common-law wife of the bandit, Murietta.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 6)

—even a little handwritten scrawl so we foreigners could be oriented?

Of course, some owl-hoot in Baker, Oregon likely knows where Sumpter is, but jiminy, most of us have to trot to a map-book (if we have one) and mine is dang near wore out and the floor has a path cut in it from my readin' seat to the book shelf.

Last winter I was going across New Mexico from Columbus to Hachita. East of Hachita a few miles, along the railroad right of way, was an enclosure and some graves in it. Does anyone know what happened?—Al Mote, 1820 Lincoln Road, E. Helena, Montana 59601

A Long Latchstring

In my drought story about Tom Benge which was in the last issue of *True West*, there is one item that I couldn't find a place for in the story, so I'll give it to you in this letter.

My dad wintered around 700 three-year-old steers on the Molloy ranch. In the spring of 1908, he sold them to an Oklahoma man to be delivered on board cars at Coleman, which meant about a fifty-mile drive. In order to go and come we had to pass through Tom Benge's ranch. The road ran less than a quarter of a mile from the house.

By the time we got the herd shaped up on the day of the roundup, we didn't get started until about two o'clock. It was about an hour before sundown when we approached Tom's ranch. He was at home and he saw the wagon and horses go by and looked out and saw the cattle coming. I came down in the lead of the herd to help the point men throw back any of Tom's cattle that might mix with ours. Evidently Tom thought I was in-

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tending to make our ranch on the Colorado which was twelve or fifteen miles away.

He came running up to me on his horse and without saying howdy, hello, or giving me a chance to say anything he yelled, "Where do you think you're going? You can't get anywhere tonight! Send a man to bring back the outfit, turn the herd into my horse pasture and camp at the house."

I explained to him that I had arranged to camp about three miles beyond his place; that I had only three days to get the herd to Coleman and get them loaded out before dark.

"Well, all right," he said, "but if you ever come by my place again, this time of day—be sure you figure on stopping."

There are not many men who will not only invite you—but almost command you—to virtually camp on his doorstep with 700 cattle to eat out his horse pasture in a single night. But that was Tom's way with anybody he regarded as a friend.—Walter Gann

* *

Just let me tell you that I've been a reader of your progressive Western magazines for many many years. How many years I don't know. I read your magazines from cover to cover and, with rare exception do I find stories that I do not enjoy. I especially enjoyed "Friendship in Time of Drought" since it depicts some of the realism of the Old West. I have a special interest in Western Americana since I'm a teacher of American History and somewhat of a history buff.

I read your short article, "Stampede!" and realize what you are up against. I've been giving your magazines credit when I order merchandise advertised. And I'll "keep pullin' 'em out" and keep you in business.—G. H. Koch, 609 Sheridan Drive, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412

Remembering Walt

I can't remember when I first discovered your publications but I can assure you "it was love at first sight." Since that time I have tried never to miss an issue of anything you publish, but since I travel a great deal I am afraid I might have missed some of them.

I have just finished reading the article in the August issue of *True West* about Walt Coburn. I also went back and read your "New Year's Resolutions" in the May 1975 issue of *Frontier Times* where you talked about Walt and so I wanted to relate an experience I had relative to him.

I have read all of his books that I could find over the years and enjoyed all his stories you have published. I often wondered where he lived and somewhere I had heard he lived in Prescott, Arizona.

In June 1971 I was invited to be the featured speaker for a week in a Christian youth camp up in the mountains just out of Prescott. My wife and I drove out and as we were winding our way up the mountain, I noticed a sign with "Coburn" on it and an arrow pointing the way we were going. I wondered if by chance that might be Walt's home. The next day I set out to find if it was. How surprised I was to find that his log cabin was in sight of the campground where I was staying. Then I was told that he had died about three weeks before that. My heart sank. However we did seek out Mrs. Coburn (Pat) and she was so gracious. She invited us into the house and showed us his study, his books, and so many other things that we were interested in. It was an unforgettable experience and the pictures and story in the August *True West* brought it all back to my mind. I regretted that I missed meeting Walt personally but I treasure the experience of having met his wife and visiting in his home. This summer I hope to retrace some of his steps around the old Circle C in Montana.

Thanks again for doing such a good job and keeping the history of the Old West alive.—J. Hoyett Lemmon, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Lee at Elm, Altus, Oklahoma 73521

Hardrock Kid

Enclosed is a clipping about the death of the Hardrock Kid in Ogden, Iowa. He was crowned King of the Hoboes five times.

I heard of two Hardrock Kids when I toured the western country by side-door Pullmans. I never met up with these characters except one that I knew in Oregon. That one was a miner and lumberjack. I don't know if the other one was a miner, hobo, lumberjack or a dude. The Oregon Hardrock Kid went by the name of Taylor and lived in Canyonville and was a family man. I don't think I ever met up with the Hardrock Kid of Iowa but I did hear a hobo called by that name one time when I was resting up in the jungles at Ogden, Utah.

I read "Roaming the Back Country" by Hood River Blackie in the June issue of *True West*. He said he's forty-nine years old but there is no date as to when the story was written. He also said he'd been on the move since September 1940. Was he forty-nine then?

I first hit the cinder path in 1916 when I was fourteen years old. My last town on a string of rattlers was in 1932 and started at San Diego, California. I got a job then in Madera and worked until I retired at sixty-two. I am now seventy-four. When asked the question, "Vas you dere, Scharlie?"—yeah, Bo, I was dere, when she was a tough go for short dough.—R. E. Cassidy, General Delivery, Mariposa, California 95338

All of Blackie's stories in our magazines are current. He is only forty-nine unless he's had a birthday since summer. However, like you, he took to the road early and is an "old-timer" in experience if not in years.

Halley's Comet

I have been a reader of your magazines for many years. I enjoy every issue very much and find them very informative.

Now to get to the reason for writing this letter. On page 57 of the June 1977 issue of *True West* there was an article about Halley's Comet. For the most part, I agree with what was contained therein; however, I believe there were two minor errors in it. The Comet did appear

(Continued on page 64)

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Ford-Carter-Graham-Keith-Garrett

I am seeking any information anyone might have concerning the gunfight on September 18, 1930 between Oscar Henry Ford and Houston Carter that resulted in the death of both men. I would like to know exactly where it happened, etc.

Oscar was probably born sometime in 1895 to 1899. He had four sisters: Florence Graham; Flora Garrett; Emma Keith; and Alice. Florence Graham had two children, Walter and Boyd, and I'd like information on any other children of these sisters.

Oscar supposedly left home at the age of twelve after his father remarried following the death of Oscar's mother. I would like to have the second wife's name and know if there were offspring, and to know Oscar's mother's name. All postage will be refunded.—Mrs. Charlotte Miller, P. O. Box 3105, Amarillo, Texas 79106

Sudbrink (Sudbring)

William Frederic Sudbrink was born July 4, 1843 in Prussia. His father was Frederic William Sudbrink; his wife Sophia Catherine Koch. William and his brother (name unknown) came to the U. S. A. and became separated. He settled in Terre Haute, Indiana. His children were Carl Louis, William H., John T., Wilhelmina, Emma Catherine, Ernest August and Walter. I would like to correspond with descendants.—Jerry W. Johnson, 44th Finance Section, APO New York 09164

Clark Marsh-L. F. Tomison

Do hope someone can help me find Clark Marsh, last heard from near Enid, Oklahoma. And especially my son, L. F. Tomison, whom I haven't seen in over fifty years. He was last heard of near Santa Barbara, California, but when I went there I couldn't find him.—A. L. Tomison, P. O. Box 363, Waterford, California 95386. Telephone 874-2240

Henry Starr

I am looking for any kin or anyone who can recall or knew Henry Starr. I know he had two sons but I do not know their names or what became of them. He died in 1921 after robbing a bank in Harrison, Arkansas. He may have been a movie star when he was not out robbing banks. Can any one recall any of his movies?—Robert Curry, 212 N. Seminole, Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74003

Conway-O'Neal-Boles-Bowles-Riley-Bowlin

Martin Conway and his wife Nora Onel (O'Neal) were both born in Ireland, came to America after 1850 and are buried in New York City. Their son Martin was born about 1849. Were there other children?

Martin (Jr.) married Mary Jane Boles in Springfield, Missouri in 1876. She was the daughter of Benjamin Franklin and Agnes Julia Proctor Boles. The Boles family lived in Wright County, Missouri in 1860. Martin and Mary Jane had ten children. Martin and Mary Jane are both buried in Wichita, Kansas.

Benjamin F. Boles was born in Indiana in 1823. He was the son of Frank and Rebecca Whitaker Boles. Frank died in 1869 in Wright County Missouri. Rebecca died in 1889. Frank's father Frank was born in Ireland to Frank and Rebecca Boles. Family has it that Frank Boles changed his name from Fitzgerald to Boles after marrying Rebecca. She was the daughter of Chief Bowles. I would like to prove this.

The Riley family was in Wayne County, Tennessee in 1850. They moved to Jasper County, Missouri and were there in 1863. My great-grandfather served with the army from Missouri during the Civil War. He married Mary Ellen Bowlin in 1868. All of his brothers and sisters were married in Jasper County. All of the Bowlin girls were married in the same county. Joseph E. Riley married Susan Rentfro, 1867. Sarah G. married Mark W. Rentfro, 1868. Nancy L. married Salathiel Sprouce, 1872. James W. married Maggie McBride. Betty P. married John R. Black, 1876.

Charles W. and John Nelson Riley, born February 15, 1868, died March 9, 1895, were the children of Jesse and Elizabeth Rebecca Morris Riley. Elizabeth's father is believed to be Henry Morris of Wayne County, Tennessee.

Roan and Mary S. Jerman Bowlin had twins, Roxana and Juliana, born September 5, 1846 in Franklin County, Illinois and Mary Ellen, born September 11, 1848. Roan Bowlin had been married before, wife's name unknown. He had two sons: John, born 1837; and Pryor, born 1840. Pryor was in the Civil War from the State of Illinois. He married Sarah A. Williams in 1866 and had sons Thomas Franklin, born 1878 in Illinois and Charles, born 1893 in Jasper County, Missouri. Pryor died there in 1905. This

(Continued on page 64)

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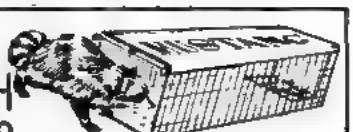

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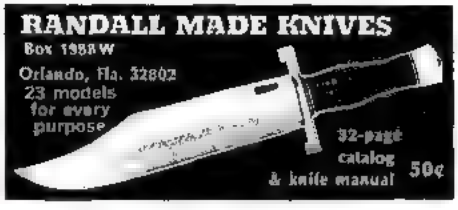

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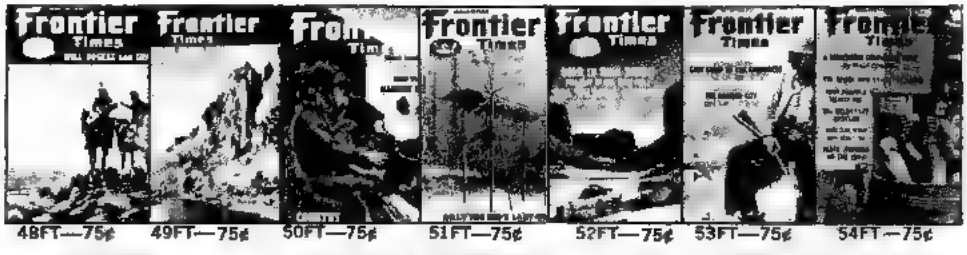

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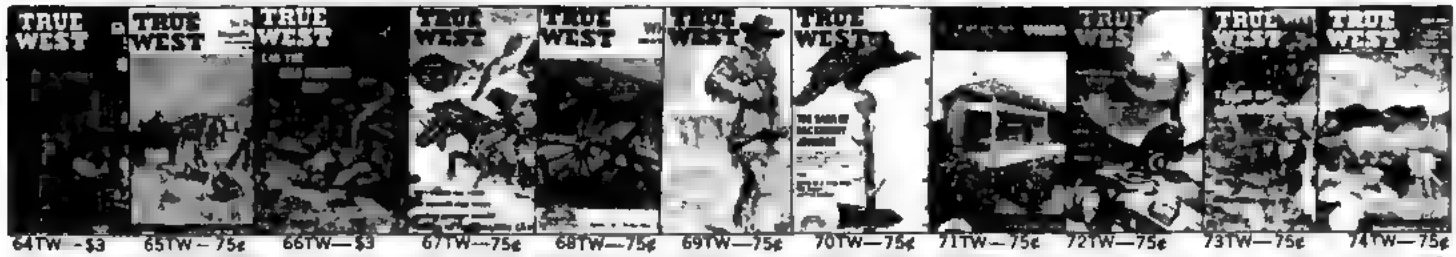

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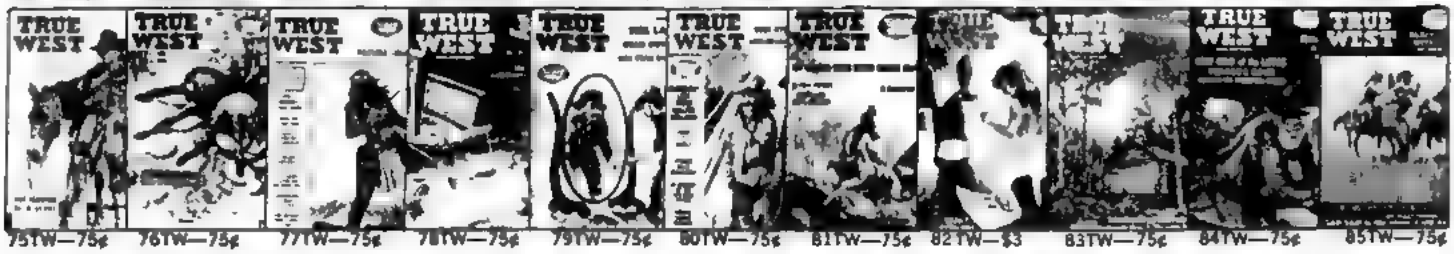

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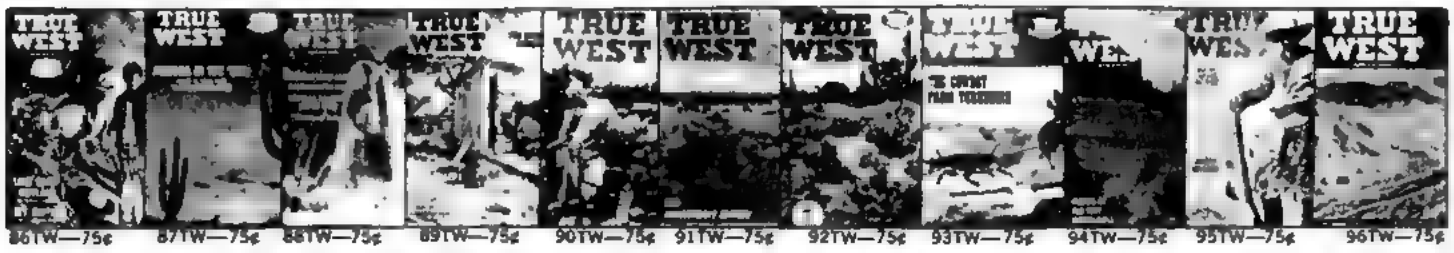

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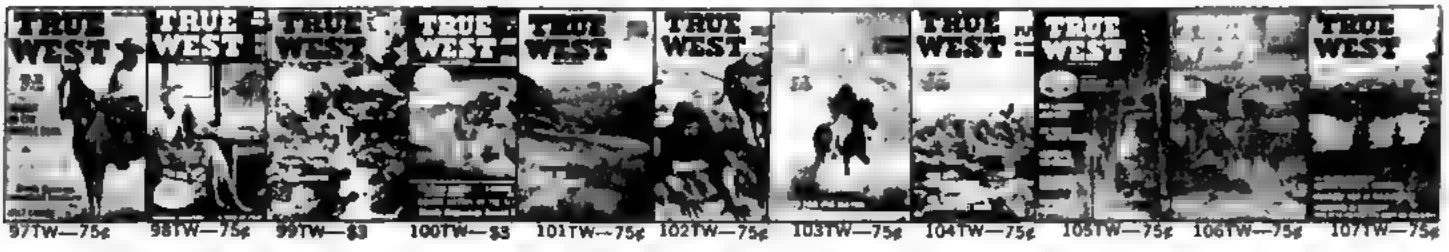

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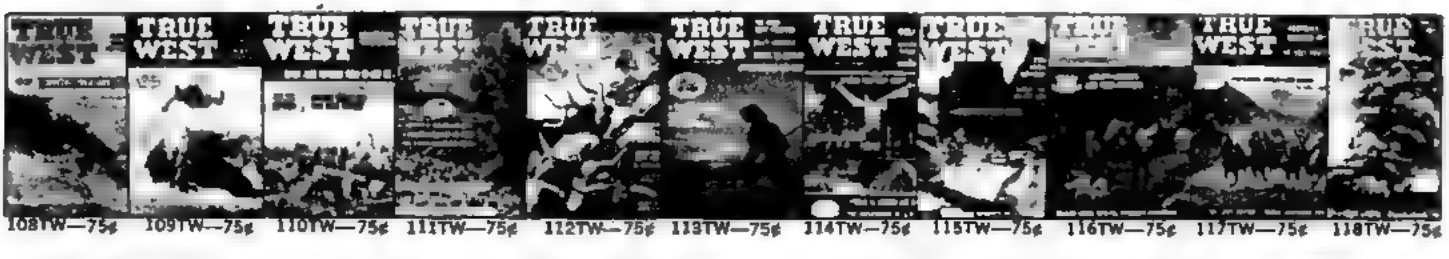

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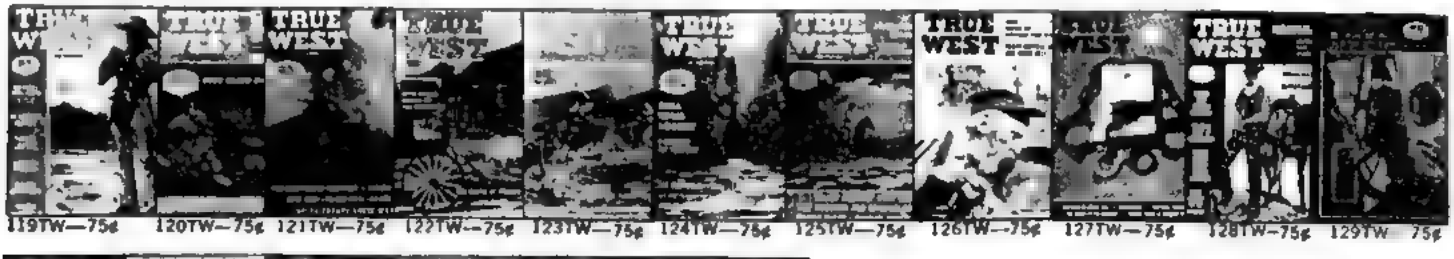

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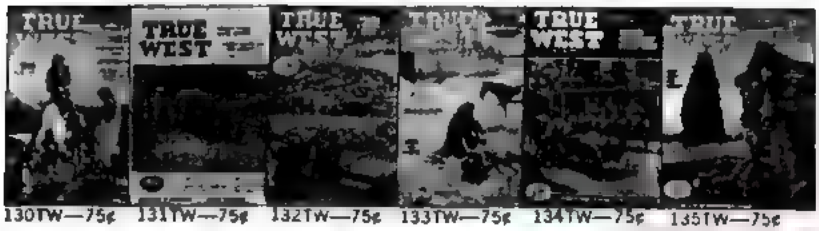

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Sourdough Gold

(Continued from page 37)

Charles kept a diary of the trip to St. Michaels. He wrote: "Left Ruby creek at 11 a.m. Stopped and ate lunch with Will Nodin and Slim Crosby, who were cutting poles and repairing the Government telegraph that had been burned down by the recent forest fire which raged on the north side of the Yukon for about 25 miles. We bade our friends goodbye and continued on down the river, having to contend with a strong wind. . . . Arrived at Whiskey creek at 10 p.m. Camped overnight. At this spot there were a couple of men doing a little prospecting on an immense deposit of well-rounded gravel that showed a trace of fine gold in most every pan.

"July 19. Camped at Bishop Mountain. Pleasant day on the river. No wind.

"July 20. Bucked a strong head wind all day. Tough going, had to row all the time. Arrived at Nulato early in the evening.

"July 21. Camped at 11 p.m., 20 miles below Kaltag. Head wind in afternoon.

"July 22. Arrived at Coalmine. Strong head wind all day. These head winds make hard work rowing. We change off every two hours. Passed a native in a birchbark canoe fishing with a large dip net. After we camped for the night he came and made signs like he wanted to sell us a big (about four pounds) whitefish. We could speak no native Indian words and he couldn't speak any English. He grunted and held out the fish.

"We jabbered at him in pidgin English and I offered him a pound package of Galts Black Tea. He took the tea and grabbed a couple more smaller fish, wanting us to take all three of them. We made signs that we wanted only the biggest one. As soon as he realized he was to get a whole pound of tea for one fish, he turned his canoe around and paddled away as fast as he could go. I expect he told his friends all about how he got the best of the white man when he got home. We didn't like Galts Black Tea at all, and were glad to get the fish for it."

For the next eight days the travelers battled heavy winds, cold rain and gnats.

"July 31. Wind blowing up the river hard and raining this morning. Afternoon started back up to Russian Mission. It is too hard rowing against this continual heavy wind. Will sell our boat and outfit and take a steamboat to St. Michaels. Hoisted our square sail and moved right along at about four miles an hour. We were going briskly along and were out from the shore about a hundred feet when we passed a few native houses just below a high cliff that jutted out into the river. We noticed the natives were watching us interestedly as we sailed by, and several of the men and boys followed along the beach to the cliff.

"We soon discovered why! As soon as we came close to the cliff we lost the wind that had been carrying us up against the current of the river, and the boat began to broach in the short choppy waves. I was sitting in the rower's seat

with the oars alongside. I shipped the oars and began rowing as fast as I could—which, with Judson steering, soon straightened us out.

"Again we came out of a rather ticklish spot without anything more serious than getting a few things wet. Now we knew what the natives had expected to see—two foolish white men lose their boat and everything in it. But we soon picked up the wind again and sailed smoothly along—keeping well out in the river when rounding a point or a jutting cliff."

They arrived at the Russian Mission on August 2. That afternoon they went with the storekeeper to a native wedding. "The Priest was a Greek Catholic," Charles wrote, "and I never understood one word he said. I don't think the natives did either.

"As soon as the ceremony was over, the groom came to the trading store and wanted canned meat for the wedding feast. But the storekeeper didn't have any canned goods of any kind. I suppose the feast had to be mainly fish, tea and some sort of bread, and possibly some blueberries, for they are ripe and plentiful.

"Aug. 3. A river steamer stopped briefly this morning at 5 a.m., but not long enough for us to get aboard. The storekeeper has been expecting his partner to come up from the Kuskokwim with the winter's catch of furs he had bought and traded for with the Kuskokwim natives. Went out in the hills and picked a couple gallons of blueberries. When we got back to the store the partner had arrived with a couple of canoe loads of fur. This afternoon we helped the traders pack the furs, mostly fox, marten, mink, muskrats, and the gray squirrels that the natives make into fur parkas for winter wear.

"Aug. 4. Just loafing, waiting for a steamboat to come downriver. We have sold our boat and outfit to the traders here and are ready to get aboard at a moment's notice.

"Aug. 5. At last a boat has come and we are aboard. The steamer *Herman* pushing two barges ahead of her stopped here, and the traders loaded their furs aboard and we took our roll of bedding and duffle bags aboard and were soon chugging away down river. The *Herman* is an oil burner and doesn't have to stop and wood up. Good thing, as the lower Yukon has no timber worth mentioning. After we passed Andreafski on the lower river there is no timber at all, just a few scrub willows.

"AUG. 6. Was awakened in very early morning by the crew rushing around, and the solid thumping of the *Herman* on the bottom of Bering Sea. The tide was out when we arrived at the mouth of the river and there was that strong head wind still blowing. So the crew had to hurry and anchor the two barges so they wouldn't tear the railing off. . . .

"They anchored the *Herman* also, but she pitched and rolled worse than a bucking bronco. We learned that the Bering Sea at the mouth of the Yukon is very shallow, and when the tide is out, a river boat has to wait till the tide rises a couple of feet so she can ride over the bar of sandy silt deposited just out from the river's mouth.

"When the tide had risen enough, the *Herman* picked up the barges and towed them astern, about a hundred feet apart on the towing cable, and the first one was over 300 feet astern. We headed quartering into a strong wind that had the sea all broke into short choppy waves. Talk about rolling, bucking and pitching! Well, that flat-bottomed river steamer did everything a wild bronc could do and a lot besides. I could plainly see why the *Herman* was towing the barges astern. The way that she was jumping around would soon make kindling wood out of the barges and her own bow if she were pushing them ahead like she did in the Yukon river. Arrived St. Michaels about 7 p.m.

"Aug. 7. The next steamer for Seattle is the *Northwestern* and will arrive in a few days.

"Aug. 8. Just to put in the time we went to work for the North American Trading and Transportation Co., called 'NAT' for short, unloading a knocked-down river steamboat from barges that were anchored close inshore. We had to carry on our shoulders all the lumber and planking, and some of the planks were so long and heavy that it took three men to carry them. Everything went fine if the three men were near the same height, but there were big men, tall men, and a few short, squat Eskimos.

"It happened that a six-foot-two, pink-faced English lad got in with two squat Eskimos, and the funny part was he was in the middle of a 30 foot plank with a short Eskimo on each end. When he came off the flat deck of the barge and started down the sloping gangplanks he almost walked on his knees so the grinning Eskimos would get a little of the load on their shoulders. After supper the bunch of us white men went back to the barge and bathed our weary feet in sea water.

"Aug. 9. All the new men came limping to work on tender feet and went at their jobs pretty slowly till they got warmed up. My own feet felt like aching leaden weights on the ends of my legs. Put in the full ten hours on the job. Feet didn't feel quite so bad this evening.

"Aug. 10. On the job unloading the boat. The *Northwestern* came into the bay and anchored about a quarter-mile out as the harbor is too shallow for seagoing vessels. Not so tired tonight—guess I'm getting toughened in to the job. We've decided to travel second class back to Seattle and save that much money for something else. Bought our tickets and are ready to go aboard as soon as she is unloaded."

Two days later they boarded the *Northwestern*, crossed Norton Sound, and anchored off Nome. They didn't go ashore as they thought their brother Guy was out in the Kougarock country.

That was the last entry in Charles'

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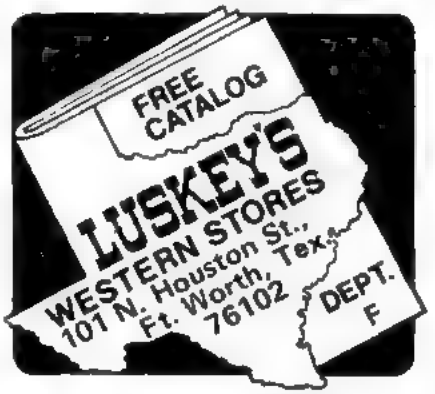

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diary, but in his memoirs he was graphic about the journey's end.

"THE next morning when I woke up the boat was underway ploughing through a calm sea. We learned that Guy had come aboard about midnight looking for us, but everybody was so busy getting ready to sail that he couldn't find where we were. So we missed him then, but he and Edd Trickle came out on the last boat leaving Nome that year.

"The first day out from Nome was bright and sunny with a freshening wind growing stronger as the day passed. By the second morning there was quite a gale blowing, and I was awakened early by the lurching of the ship. I noticed that Judson was not in his bed. I had begun to feel the effects of the rolling boat and was undecided just what to do. A fellow traveler in a nearby bunk got up and began a hasty scramble up the companionway stairs. He got part way up and was taken sick.

"A hardened old seafarer yelled at him, 'Get the hell outta here, you stinkin' son-of-a-b! Git the hell up them steps or I'll come help you up with the toe of my boot!'

" 'Come on and put me up, you blankety-blank so-and-so!' the sick man hollered back between gasps. 'Come on and put me up and you won't live to tell about it! The way I feel right now I don't care if I die, and I'd just as soon take you along with me! Come on, you dirty b—!' The sick man on the steps glared around with glassy eyes, then wearily climbed on up the stairs.

"I felt it wouldn't be long until I would be in the same fix. I got up, dressing hastily, and climbed up to the main deck where several of the crew were rushing around putting in the storm bulkheads to keep the seas from coming aboard. I just did manage to get across the deck where the water was shoe-top deep and lean against one of the big seawater tanks. Then I was seasick.

"One of the crew yelled at me, 'Get the hell out of here or you are liable to get washed overboard!'

" 'I don't give a damn if I do,' I replied as I clutched a corner of the tank.

"One of the crewmen took pity on me and said, 'This is no place for you, young fellow. You'll get wet all over if you stay here. You just climb out of here and go amidship and get up on the grating around the smoke stack and the ventilators. It's warm up there and you won't notice the roll of the ship so much.'

"I was too sick to thank him, but I slowly made my way to the middle of the ship and climbed out in the open air and on up the grating around the smokestack. Judson and a couple of other fellows were there ahead of me.

"It was quite a relief to get out in the open air, and it was warm and comfortable on that deck-like grating. The only disagreeable thing was the ventilator from the kitchen—you couldn't help getting a strong whiff now and then of cooking food. And the way I felt I never expected to eat again. In fact, the only thing that kept me alive was the hope that I would die pretty quick or the tossing ship would take one big dive and go to the bottom of the Bering Sea.

"After the crew got the storm bulkheads all in place, they rigged up a stay sail, fore and aft, to steady the ship in the quartering seas. The waves were high and wild with great whitecaps on every crest, and the spray was blown clear up on the grating where we were. Once in awhile the old *Northwestern* would take a long side-roll and us fellows on the grating could look right down into the churning seas alongside. When we got to Seattle and I saw the boat docked, she stuck out of the water so high I wondered how she ever kept from tipping over in that storm on the Bering Sea.

"It was really some storm. Several of the crew and most of the passengers were seasick. The cooks sure didn't have much to do for a couple of days. They must have had to chain the pots and pans on the stove to keep them there.

"Judson and I put in two days and one night up on that grating. The second day I began to take a little notice of the things going on around the main deck, and had the first stirring of an appetite. I ate a couple of soda crackers.

"After that I took a little more interest in food. We paid extra and ate at the Petty Officers' mess. The food at the crew's mess and the steerage mess was not any too appetizing to a person just recovering from seasickness. After passing Dutch Harbor we were in the North Pacific Ocean and had fair weather all the way to Seattle, where we arrived late in the afternoon of the seventh day from St. Michaels.

"I had been aboard ship long enough to acquire sea legs, but it looked more like we were drunk as we walked up the sidewalk. It took a couple of days before I quit trying to make sidewalks roll and weave like the deck of ship."

That was the end of the Goff brothers' Alaskan venture, but just the beginning of their gold mining careers. Rejoined by Guy, they spent many years following the rainbow's trail throughout Idaho, finally settling in the famous Leesburg area in the Salmon River country where they mined steadily and successfully for twenty-three years before retiring in Salmon City.

Judson and Guy remained bachelors as long as they lived, but Charles, at age sixty-five, married a lovely lady with several children—a "ready made family," as he put it. Only then did he find time to follow the second biggest urge of his life—the desire to write. He taught himself, and wrote two books for children, *The Moonlight Man* and *Mary Lou in Rainbow Land.*

Charles marked his 93rd birthday with members of his family on February 27, 1971, at Payette, Idaho. The following summer, the wonderful old prospector, Charles Goff, died.

To me he gave his long, laboriously hand-written memoirs of a forty-year quest for gold from which this story is taken. Those "old Idaho boys," the Goff brothers, were true Westerners.

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By The Old Bookaroos

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We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher in care of this office and we will be glad to forward. Be sure to make your check payable to the publisher of the book, not to us.

BIG THICKET TALES

The Stolen Steers: A Tale of the Big Thicket (Texas A & M University Press, $6.75) by Bill Brett, with drawings by Michael Frary and a foreword by William A. Owens, is the most entertaining yarn this reviewer has read in a long time. Whether it's fact, fiction, fable or folklore is not important. What is important is the authentic descriptions and settings of the Big Thicket country around the turn of the century. Author Brett can make you laugh, pity, want to cry, and keep you in suspense. If you've never had good old Southern country chills and fever (malaria), you'll have compassion for those who have after reading the book. Most important, Brett, in a very subtle yet forceful way, gives an understanding of people in relation to their surroundings and to each other. His style and characters are somewhat reminiscent of Fred Gipson (*Hound Dog Man*), yet he has a skill all his own. Highly recommended.

BLACK SLAVERY AMONG THE CHEROKEES

A little-known page of American history is the story of Black slavery among the Cherokee Indians. Now R. Halliburton, Jr. has written a book detailing this history from the Cherokees' first contact with Europeans through the Civil War and the emancipation of slavery in the United States. *Red over Black* (Greenwood Press, 51 Riverside Ave., Westport, Conn., 06880, 1977, $15.95) is an eye-opening survey. Halliburton suggests that the prosperity of the Cherokee Indians was based on their slave labor. He points out that the Cherokee Indians viewed Blacks, like their white counterparts, as economic commodities. And he details how they were overworked, underfed, punished and sold.

Halliburton's book contains much documentation including statistics on slaves and slaveholders, plus a series of interviews conducted with ex-slaves in the 1930s. His 219-page book includes illustrations and a bibliography. It's an interesting contribution to the history of one of the largest and most advanced Indian tribes that existed in America.

Recommended.

A BAG OF GRIZZLIES

Late in the 19th century a Western hunter of grizzly bears hung up his rifle and began studying grizzlies. His name was William H. Wright. In 1909, in an attempt to help prevent what Wright believed was the inevitable decline of the grizzly, he wrote a book about the animal. It has long been out of print. But now, almost seven decades later, his fine effort has been reprinted.

The Grizzly Bear (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588, $13.50 cloth, $3.95 paper) includes Wright's own experiences with grizzlies and much more. He details the early history of the animal in North America from the time of Lewis and Clark. And he tells of the adventures of James Capen "Grizzly" Adams of more recent television fame. Wright includes a chapter on the scientific classification of bears.

Wright not only observed grizzlies but he photographed them. The photos from the 1909 edition have been reproduced in the new 1977 edition. The 274-page reprint edition includes an introduction by Frank C. Craighead, Jr., director of the Environmental Research Center at Moose, Wyoming. It gives the new edition historical perspective.

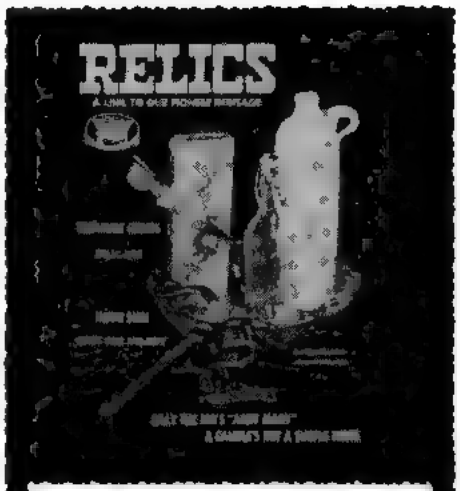
Wright's book is rich in observation. His stories are delightful. This reviewer is pleased to see this fine book again available. It's a must for all persons who admire the mighty grizzly.

WESTERN GHOST TOWNS

Helldorado's Ghosts and Camps of the Old Southwest by Norman D. Weis (Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho, 83605, 1977, $9.95) is a 7,000-mile tour that you may enjoy from your armchair. The author takes you on a journey to 67 ghost towns in California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah. The 365-page book is full of fine black and white photographs of the towns visited by Weis. And his beautiful narrative not only describes what he found in each ghost town, but Weis tells the reader why the town had existed and speculates on when and why it was deserted. Weis provides useful maps to aid the reader who may wish to visit the Helldorados of the past. A helpful bibliography and good index are included. Highly recommended.

THE JAMES BOYS

Back in 1966 the University of Missouri Press published *Jesse James Was His Name* by William A. Settle, Jr. It was one of more than a dozen books published about the one-time Missouri outlaw. But the late Ramon Adams, an



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authority on Western outlaws and gunmen, described Settle's book as "one of the few reliable accounts." And Adams said the book was "well-written and well-annotated."

The first edition has long since become difficult to locate without a lengthy search. But now *Jesse James Was His Name* has been reprinted. (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, Neb., 68588, $3.95 paper).

Readers interested in the fact and fiction of the James boys' careers in crime will be pleased to learn of the book's availability again. This reprint edition is well illustrated and contains maps, notes, a bibliography, index and the full story of Frank and Jesse's exploits that have made them legends in the American West.

Highly recommended.

DAGGETT COUNTY, UTAH

In 1947 Dick Dunham wrote a brief history of Daggett County in northeast Utah called *Our Strip of Land*. Now three decades later the book has been revised and greatly enlarged by Dunham and his wife Vivian. The new edition is entitled *Flaming Gorge Country* (Daggett County Lions Club, Box 267, Manila, Utah, 84046, $7.00 limited clothbound, $4.75 paperback plus 50¢ postage).

This 384-page book offers armchair adventurers a fascinating story of a large chunk of northeast Utah plus nearby areas in southwest Wyoming and northwest Colorado. Dunham not only explores the natural history of the region but recounts fascinating tales about the mountain men, Shoshonis and Ute Indians and the later traders, cattle and sheep men, prospectors, rustlers, horse thieves and other rascals.

The book contains more than 200 illustrations including six maps. A helpful bibliography is included with acknowledgements. The book is a must for anyone planning to visit Flaming Gorge Lake south of Green River, Wyoming, and Daggett County, Utah, at the southern end of the lake. Good reading and highly recommended.

THE ART OF CHARLES BIRD KING

Most westerners have heard of George Catlin, the 19th century artist. His work is well known. But the name Charles Bird King, another 19th century artist, is hardly known. Herman J. Viola's book, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King* (copublished by the Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D. C., and Doubleday, New York, $19.95) should do much to give King the place he deserves in Western art.

Charles Bird King rivals George Catlin and other portrait painters of the first half of the 19th century. King painted the portraits of more than 100 Indian leaders brought to Washington as guests of the government. Red Jacket, Black Hawk, Keokuk and others were painted by King. His work was commissioned by Thomas L. McKenney, the man who established the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (McKenney is the subject of another book by Viola published in 1974.)

Perhaps King would be as well known as Catlin today if his portraits had not been destroyed by a fire at the Smithsonian in 1865. Author Viola, however, has located more than sixty of King's portraits—replicas made by King—and includes many in this 152-page book. Most are produced in fine color, but this effort is not simply a picture book. Viola tells the story of King, who was born in Rhode Island in 1785. He traces the artist's history, especially his work in Washington where he died in 1862. Highly recommended.

PLACER MINING IN THE KLONDIKE

There are many books telling the story of the Klondike Gold Rush late in the 19th century. But what happened in Dawson and the surrounding region after gold seekers became discouraged and left is a little known story. *The Gold Hustlers* by Lewis Green (Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., Box 4-EEE, Anchorage, Alaska, 99509, $7.95 paper) tells what has happened since 1896 when gold was discovered on Rabbit Creek. Author Lewis Green carries the story through until about a decade ago when the last gold dredge was shut down.

This interesting book, however, is more than just a general history of the region. Green focuses on the quick-money men who moved into the region. Among them was an Oxford-educated Englishman named Arthur Newton Christian Treadgold. He gained control of half the Klondike within three years. Another was Joe Boyle who parlayed a government concession in the Klondike River valley into a placer empire. Their stories and others are emphasized in this well-illustrated book. Footnotes, a good bibliography and index are included in this nicely produced book. Recommended.

LOS ANGELES HISTORY

For two hundred years a steady stream of unlikely characters and unusual events have shaped the history of Los Angeles and contributed to its present character. *All Star Cast: An Anecdotal History of Los Angeles* (Thomas Y.. Crowell Co., New York, $13.95) by Stephen Longstreet is an account of the transformation of the peaceful Mexican town to the modern bustling metropolis —glamour center of the world. Indians, bandits, soldiers, gold, railroads, water, Hollywood, oil, politics, freeways and the Manson family are some of the subjects covered in the book's 45 chapters and 379 pages. Photos, prints and drawings plus a helpful index are included.

Longstreet, a longtime resident of Beverly Hills, has long been known for his novels and screen scripts. He has won many awards and is currently teaching a course on modern writers and writing at the University of Southern California. While each chapter is an interesting story alone, together they weave a fascinating and complete history of L. A. Recommended.

MEDICINE SHOWS

Medicine Show: Conning People and Making Them Like It by Mary Calhoun (Harper & Row, New York, $6.95) is a fascinating book about the traveling medicine shows of years gone by. Al-

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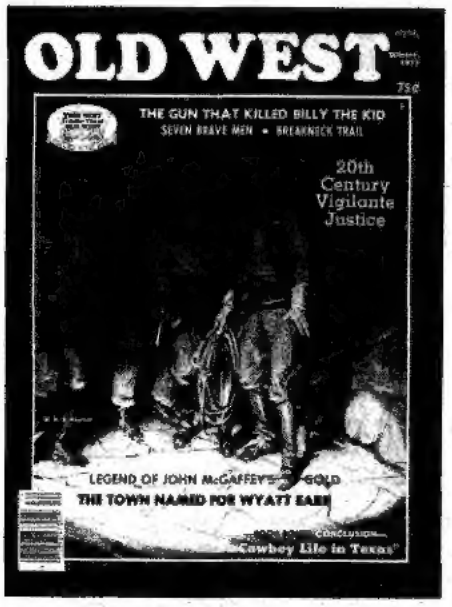
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Even if such products of medicine shows don't appeal to you, Mary Calhoun's book will. She not only recalls many personal experiences, but she includes a great deal of material uncovered through research.

The book is well illustrated, contains a good index, helpful bibliography and a glossary of medicine show terms. Recommended.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 54)

in 1910 as stated, but it will not be seen again until February, 1986 and not in 1985. It is seen every 76 years, not every 75 years. In 1948 Halley's Comet reached aphelion and will be at perihelion in 1986. It is at the latter point that we may view it from Earth.—Robert A. Fox, 9 Mary Ann Court, West Keansburg, New Jersey 07734

Well, this letter was the occasion of a lot of interesting reading. Naturally we made a run for the reference books to see if there was any way we could weasel out of saying our author, Don Buchan, and we were wrong.

To our surprise the reference book hedged around like we do here at W. P. Speaking of the Comet it said, "It reappears about every 77 years, but the intervals can be two years longer or shorter." But then it nailed us by saying, "Astronomers estimate it will return about 1986."

So Mr. Fox, you're right. And read on for a further example of how foolhardy it is for us to make a definite statement —about anything.

Bank Holiday

I read "The West's First Subway" by John Mantz in the October issue of *True West*. The last paragraph reads as follows:

"But then, the people of Eureka have always been purposeful. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered all United States banks closed back in 1933 in order to restructure the banking industry, Eureka's Farmers and Merchants Bank refused to comply. It was the only bank in the entire nation to stay open."

This is a misstatement because the Farmers Savings Bank, Princeton, Scott County, Iowa did not close either. It is one of our local banks. This is its 70th year of continuous operation.—DeWitt Bragonier, Box 26, LeClaire, Iowa 52753

And How About This!

CORRECTION

The photo of Robert H. Hall on page 8 of the October '77 TRUE WEST is the Robert Hall of Centennial Valley, not Lander.

Unusual Collection

The story about the old gun in the August 1977 *True West* ("Buried Treasure in Squirrel Gulch") was very interesting.

In the summer of 1917 I also found a gun exactly like the one described by the author. I found this gun hidden behind a fence post in high grass three miles north of Oakdale while hauling grain from the harvester to the warehouse. I was driving eight animals pulling two wagons. The gun was in good condition and couldn't have been there very long. There were three live shells and one empty shell in the cylinder. It had three notches filed in the frame just in front of the trigger guard.

I later traded this gun to a young man to take on a hunting trip. He filled the chamber full of shells and carried it in a holster that was too small. He stooped over in a blacksmith shop and the gun fell out and landed on a piece of iron. It went off and the bullet entered his body just above the belt. He only lived a little while.

I was working on a road-widening project for the county of Napa around 1925 and found a Colt .38 double-action hand gun with a three and one-half inch barrel. It was hidden in a bunch of brush. The gun was in good condition and fully loaded but one cartridge had been fired.

I just gave my daughter two very old guns. Both are old cap and ball. One is a double-barrel shotgun and the other is an old Derringer five-shot. The original bullet mould and holster is with the gun. I can trace these guns back seven generations.—M. C. Armstrong, 188 Ashlar Drive, Napa, California 94558

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 55)

Bowlin family are descendants of Pocahontas. Roan Bowlin had brothers and sisters. A few of their descendants have been found. I am looking for any Bowlin descendant from Rodney Bolling and Trisa Harris of North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Illinois, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Rodney's mother was full blood Cherokee Indian. Anne Roan was married to Jared Bolling and they had only the one son. Jared had a brother named Smith. I have been unable to find any information on him.—Mrs. Shirley J. Conway Pont, 4930 Slate Creek Road, Placerville, California 95667

Wiles-Hart

Our family has been diligently seeking a trail that would lead to our relative, Mrs. J. P. Wiles, nee Opal Hartt, or her family. They dropped out of sight in 1936. She and her husband left Dallas in that year with two children, heading West. We had a "probable" report on them, that they were in southern California in the 1940s. Her husband had relatives who may be in Arizona, New Mexico or Nevada. Anyone knowing of this family, please write.—Wilson A. Barkman, 2222 West 11th Street, Irving, Texas 75060

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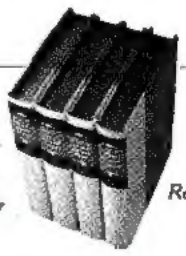

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